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A Magazine of Verse

VOLUME XIII

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Edited by
Harriet Monroe



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A Magazine of Verse

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Others besides these guarantors who testify to their appreciation of the magazine by generous gifts are:

Mr. Edward L. Ryerson
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Two annual prizes and one special prize will be awarded next November for good work of the current year. To the donors of these prizes, as well as to the above list of guarantors, the editor wishes to express the appreciation of the staff and the poets:

To Mr. S. O. Levinson, for the Helen Haire Levinson Prize of two hundred dollars, to be awarded for the sixth time; to the anonymous guarantor who will present, for the fifth time, a prize of one hundred dollars; and to Mr. S. King Russell, for his recent offer of a prize of one hundred dollars for poems by a young poet.

We feel that these prizes are a most valuable public service to the art.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME XIII

VERSE

	PAGE
<i>Aldington, Richard:</i>	
Prayers and Fantasies I-VIII	67
<i>Aldis, Mary:</i>	
Thrones	18
O Bitter Day	19
Embarcation	19
Go from Me	20
<i>Alondra, A.:</i>	
The Trenches	21
<i>Ayscough, Florence: (See Lowell).</i>	
<i>Bakeless, John:</i>	
Mountain Tops	253
<i>Bernhardt, Lysiane:</i>	
La Neige à Poughkeepsie	136
<i>Birch, Helen Louise:</i>	
THREE POEMS:	
Laughing in the Moonlight	78
Vertigo	81
And So the Days Go By	82
<i>Bishop, Morris:</i>	
WITH THE A. E. F.:	
Ante Proelium	308
Before my Fire in a French Village	308
Le Père Segret	309
The Piker	310
<i>Bowman, Louise Morey:</i>	
And Forbid Them Not	306
<i>Brownell, Baker:</i>	
En Masse	255
<i>Buck, Howard:</i>	
Their Strange Eyes Hold No Vision	12
<i>Bynner, Witter: (Translator):</i>	
The Farewell (From the French of Charles Vildrac)	243
<i>Corbin, Alice:</i>	
RED EARTH:	
Muy Vieja Mexicana	194
On the Acequia Madre	195
El Rito de Santa Fe	196
CANDLE-LIGHT AND SUN:	
Candle-light	197
The Mask	197
Rain-prayer	198
Fame	198
Song of Sunlight	198
<i>Cunningham, C.:</i>	
The Alien	253
<i>Driscoll, Louise:</i>	
The Garden of the West	138
<i>Fiske, Isabel Howe:</i>	
Somewhere in France	74
<i>Flexner, Hortense:</i>	
Decoration for Valor	316

	PAGE
<i>Gaines, Ruth:</i>	
Paris, 1917	11
<i>Garnett, Louise Ayres:</i>	
FLOWERS OF WAR:	
The Lilies of France	14
Know Thyself	14
Comrades	15
<i>Glaenger, Richard Butler:</i>	
CRAYONS OF DOMINICA:	
Under the Saman	250
The Little Donkey	250
First Growth	250
Caribbean Nights	251
<i>Greenwood, Julia Wickham:</i>	
The Kind Heart	17
<i>Gregory, Allene:</i>	
Litany	13
<i>Hamilton, Marion Ethel:</i>	
Pink Blossoms	311
<i>Harvey, Shirley:</i>	
Rainy Days	75
<i>Head, Cloyd:</i>	
WAR SEQUENCE:	
Prelude	6
The Marne	6
They March Through the Streets of Paris	7
The German Empire—Bismarck, Von Moltke	9
Epilogue	10
<i>Hoyt, Helen:</i>	
THE HARP:	
I Have Found My Beloved	118
Stature	119
Name	119
Difference	119
Unity	120
Happiness Betrays Me	120
Triumph	121
Interlude	121
At the Museum	122
Memory	123
Oh We Shall Meet	123
Ascension	124
The Root	124
<i>Judson, Margaret:</i>	
In the Night	254
<i>Lawrence, D. H.:</i>	
POEMS:	
Tommyies in the Train	258
War Baby	259
Obsequial Chant	260
Bread Upon the Waters	261
Pentecostal	262
Nostalgia	263
<i>Lee, Agnes:</i>	
Peace	117
PICTURES OF WOMEN:	
An Old Woman with Flowers	200
The Slacker	200
The Broken Tie	201

	PAGE
Bark-Bound	201
In the Morgue	202
The Sweeper	203
<i>Lowell, Amy, and Ayscough, Florence (Translators):</i>	
CHINESE WRITTEN WALL PICTURES:	
An Evening Meeting	233
The Emperor's Return from a Journey to the South	234
On Seeing the Portrait of a Beautiful Concubine	254
Calligraphy	235
The Palace Blossoms	236
One Goes a Journey	236
From the Straw Hut Among the Seven Peaks I-II	237
On the Classic of the Hills and Sea	238
A Recluse	239
After How Many Years	239
The Inn at the Western Lake	242
<i>McAlmon, Robert M.:</i>	
FLYING:	
Aero-Laughter	317
Aero-Metre	318
Consecration	319
Consummation	319
Volplanetor	320
Perspicuity	320
<i>Michelson, Max:</i>	
MASKS:	
A Helen	83
Girls I-III	84
Myrrh	85
Pain	85
A Lady Talking to a Poet	86
The Golden Apple	86
A Dilettante	86
The Traitor	86
A Rich Gentleman	87
A Petit Bourgeois	87
La Mort de Paul Verlaine	88
Death	89
To a Woman Asleep in a Street-Car	89
<i>Monroe, Harriet:</i>	
America	133
<i>Patterson, Antoinette De Coursey:</i>	
Honors	15
<i>Pound, Ezra:</i>	
Poems from the Propertius Series I-IV	291
<i>Powys, John Cowper:</i>	
The Hope	16
<i>Rees, Arthur D.:</i>	
VOLUNTEERS:	
Tears, Idle Tears!	125
Cares That Infest the Day	127
Longings for Home	128
Unseeing the Seen	129
The Melancholy Plaint of the Russian Song	131
<i>Ridge, Lola:</i>	
CHROMATICS:	
The Song	26
Iron Wine	26
The Fiddler	27

	PAGE
Dawn-wind	28
The Edge I-II	29
<i>Robinson, Eloise:</i>	
Fatherland	I
<i>Sandburg, Carl:</i>	
REDHAW WINDS:	
Falltime	22
Autumn Movement	22
Valley Song	23
"Old-fashioned Requited Love"	24
The Next Child Waits	25
ASSYRIAN TABLETS FROM THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM, B. C.	
Ashurnatsirpal the Third	24
Bilbea	25
<i>Sarett, Lew R.:</i>	
The Blue Duck—A Chippewa Medicine Dance	59
Chippewa Flute Song	64
<i>Seiffert, Marjorie Allen:</i>	
The Old Woman—A Morality Play in Two Parts	204
<i>Shaw, Frances:</i>	
Grandmother	312
World Lullaby	312
<i>Sherwood, Charles L.:</i>	
My Ten Buckeyes	74
<i>Snelling, Florence D.:</i>	
March in Tryon I-III	314
<i>Stearns, Harold Crawford:</i>	
Reuben Roy	76
<i>Tree, Iris:</i>	
Afterwards	72
<i>Twitchell, Anna Spencer:</i>	
Compensation	313
<i>Van Slyke, B. K.:</i>	
Orpheus in the Street	252
In Winter	252
<i>Vildrac, Charles: (See Witter Bynner):</i>	
<i>Warren, G. O.:</i>	
Secrecy	311
<i>Williams, William Carlos:</i>	
BROKEN WINDOWS:	
Berket and the Stars	300
The Young Laundryman	300
Time the Hangman	300
Complete Destruction	301
The Poor	301
A Friend of Mine	302
The Gentle Man	302
For any Girl's Locket	302
The Soughing Wind	302
Epitaph	303
Spring	303
Stroller	303
Memory of April	303
Play, Lines	304
The Dark Day	304
Thursday	304
Man in a Room	305
<i>Yeats, William Butler:</i>	
The Only Jealousy of Emer	175

PROSE

	PAGE
Joyce Kilmer, <i>H. M.</i>	31
The Other Stars in the Poets' Flag, <i>H. M.</i>	34
"Aesthetic and Social Criticism," <i>H. M.</i>	37
REVIEWS:	
Wild Swans, <i>M. M.</i>	42
<i>The Wild Swans at Coole, Other Verses and a Play in Verse,</i> by W. B. Yeats	
A. Rhapsodist, <i>H. M.</i>	44
<i>Children of the Sun—Rhapsodies and Poems,</i> by Wallace Gould	
Lewisohn on French Poets, <i>Agnes Lee Freer</i>	52
<i>The Poets of Modern France,</i> by Ludwig Lewisohn	
CORRESPONDENCE:	
Letters from France, <i>Eloise Robinson, Malcolm W. Vaughn</i>	55
A Century in Illinois, <i>H. M.</i>	90
An International Episode, <i>H. M.</i>	94
Poetry an Essential Industry, <i>H. M.</i>	96
REVIEWS:	
Miss Lowell and Polyphonic Prose, <i>H. M.</i>	97
<i>Can Grande's Castle,</i> by Amy Lowell	
<i>Amy Lowell—a Critical Appreciation,</i> by W. Bryher	
A Potential Artist, <i>H. M.</i>	102
<i>Nocturne of Remembered Spring and Other Poems,</i> by Conrad Aiken	
OUR CONTEMPORARIES:	
One on Us	105
Praise from Sir Hubert	105
CORRESPONDENCE:	
A Word from Mr. Sarett, <i>Lew. R. Sarett</i>	106
A Tribute to Mr. Michelson, <i>Frances Shaw</i>	107
Announcement of Awards	108
Christmas Indeed, <i>H. M.</i>	146
Tribute to Joyce Kilmer, <i>Marsden Hartley</i>	149
REVIEWS:	
Carl Sandburg's New Book, <i>Alfred Kreymborg</i>	155
<i>Cornhuskers,</i> by Carl Sandburg	
Stephens as Elegist and Anthologist, <i>A. C. H.</i>	161
<i>Green Branches and Reincarnations,</i> by James Stephens	
In the Irish Mode, <i>A. C. H.</i>	165
<i>My Ireland—Songs and Simple Rhymes,</i> by Francis Carlin	
First Books of Verse, <i>H. M.</i>	167
<i>Renaissance and Other Poems,</i> by Edna St. Vincent Millay	
<i>Green Leaves,</i> by Florence Ripley Mastin	
<i>Etchings,</i> by Robert Earl Barclay	
CORRESPONDENCE:	
The Day of Victory, <i>E. C.</i>	171
A Word of Protest, <i>Minna Mathison</i>	172
Five Years of Italian Poetry (1910-1915), with translations from Corrado Govoni, Salvatore di Giacomo, Piero Jahier, Aldo Palez- zeschi, Umberto Saba, and Scipio Slataper, <i>Emanuel Carnevali</i>	209
REVIEWS:	
Great Poetry, <i>H. M.</i>	219
<i>On Heaven and Poems Written on Active Service,</i> by Ford Madox Hueffer	
Kreymborg's Plays for Poem-Mimes, <i>Marjorie Allen Seiffert</i>	224
OUR CONTEMPORARIES:	
Two New Ones	227

CORRESPONDENCE:

About Mr. Underwood's Prize, <i>Paul Fortier Jones</i>	228
Mr. Aiken and the Essential Industry, <i>Conrad Aiken</i>	230
The Viereck Incident, <i>H. M.</i>	265
Written Pictures, <i>Florence Ayscough</i>	268

REVIEWS:

Perfume of Cathay, <i>John Gould Fletcher</i>	273
<i>Chinese Poems</i> , translated by Arthur Waley	
Narcissus at War, <i>H. M.</i>	281
<i>Eidola</i> , by Frederic Manning	
Another Soldier-Poet, <i>A. C. H.</i>	283
<i>The Old Huntsman</i> , by Siegfried Sassoon	

CORRESPONDENCE:

An English Poet on POETRY, <i>Herbert Trench</i>	285
A Correction	287

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A New Prize	288
A Change in the Staff	288
A Radical-conservative, <i>H. M.</i>	322
A Gold Star for Gladys Cromwell, <i>H. M.</i>	326

REVIEWS:

A Doughboy Anthology, <i>Vachel Lindsay</i>	329
<i>Yanks—A Book of A. E. F. Verse</i>	
A Poet in Arms, <i>Alfred Kreymborg</i>	335
<i>The Ghetto and Other Poems</i> , by Lola Ridge	
Two Books by Fletcher, <i>A. C. H.</i>	341
<i>Japanese Prints</i> , and <i>The Tree of Life</i> , by John Gould Fletcher	
Pale Colors, <i>Helen Birch</i>	342
<i>Minna and Myself</i> , by Maxwell Bodenheim	
Swinburne's Baby Poems, <i>H. M.</i>	344
<i>The Springtide of Life—Poems of Childhood</i> , by Algernon Charles Swinburne	

CORRESPONDENCE:

Serving in the A. E. F., <i>Morris Bishop</i>	346
Notes	58, 115, 173, 232, 289, 347
Books Received	115, 174, 232, 290, 348

A Magazine of Verse

OCTOBER, 1918

FATHERLAND

FOR what would a man die?
For what would a man be dead,
In April?—go down and lie
In a low bed,
And when spring was passing by
Pull the covers over his head?

Did he know his house would be dark,
The window curtains drawn,
When the morning star was a spark
On the ashes of the dawn?—
Chilly and very low,
With no door swinging back and forth
Where he may pass and go

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Over the shining swarth,
With the winds singing to and fro
And the redbirds winging north?
Would he lie like a straight ash stick
When the roots around him stir
And the other dead are quick—
The daisy and ragweed and burr?—
Lie still, though he hear in his night
The wind blowing on to June;
The silence of ripe sunlight
Over the grass at noon;
The stars like bees overhead
In the apple trees and the plums?
For what would a man be dead
Now April comes?

Do men love Fatherland
So, that they die for these:
Night in blue valleys, and
The breakers of blue seas;
Clouds marching, caravanned,
And star-acquainted trees;
Cities time's made grey
And talkative and wise;
Hills so old they may
Watch pain with patient eyes;
Young mountain-tops that play
At touching the skies;

The heavens, like a bent hand ;
The brown earth underneath?
Are these his Fatherland,
For which man stops his breath,
Takes off his body, and
Goes down to sit with Death?

Or is it this that rouses
His heart to go:
Do streets of little houses
Keep haunting him so
With their secrets, like small caged birds
That flutter and fly at the sill,
And their ghosts of long-dead words
That are walking still ;
With their cool white beds for sleep,
And their tables spread,
And their tented roofs that keep
Out the curious moon overhead?

For these what man would end
His own fire and lamp-light,
His thought that is his friend
And sits by his hearth at night ;
His old, acquainted clothes
And the sweet taste of bread—
All of the things he knows—
Go down in the earth and be dead?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

No, this is Fatherland,
For which men, lifting up
Life, toss it on the sand
Like water from a cup:
A little land that has
Truth round it like a sea,
Where dreams are many as
The leaves are on a tree,
And stars grow in the grass
For men to touch and see.
A little, holy land
Within all hearts of men
The earth holds in her hand—
There he is citizen
With high, heroic things,
With faiths and loyalties,
With deeds that put on wings,
And songs that sing of these;
With sacrifice, though it be
For a mistaken dream;
Justice and mercy
Alive with a little gleam
In the earth of men who say
They have rooted it from the sod
And taken another way
And got them another God.

From mountains of the moon
April has come once more;

Eloise Robinson

But April, nor May, nor June,
Will ever find his door.
He lies so quiet now
In puzzlement how death
Can be so kind, and how
Lightly he draws his breath.
Almost afraid to stir
Lest he find his dreaming vain,
He drinks of wonder there
As green leaves drink the rain.
I think he was not sad
To feel his weight of clay,
Nor sorry that he had
Lost April's way.
He had such glory in
His closing eyes
He needs no stars to spin
And bubble in clear skies,
No young south wind that leaps
Singing, no April flowers;
Within his house he keeps
A greater spring than ours.

Eloise Robinson

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

WAR SEQUENCE

PRELUDE

I thought—

Surely, of those in battle, one, bearing the impulse of the
years before—the splendid sunset—would create a song,
A song of war!

But none—not one has spoken. And the singers die, fighting
in silence, comrade by comrade—fall, leaving above their
death no Marseillaise.

I thought—

My people, finding perhaps their freedom in a war for free-
dom, might find also utterance, singing of the rite of
hecatombs offered to greater than a god.

But none—not one has spoken . . . Over France—the voice
of France is Rheims, a threnody graven in silence. Yet
the song to break the anguish of that silence, the life-
song uttered, not the dirge of Rheims?

THE MARNE

Within that secret place—

Waste land where the rivers run red

Bearing the blood of the dead
To the charnel sea—
They build a temple and a mystery:
A freedom such as none may ever share
Who have not lived with Death;
Who have not killed.

Untempered passion, building as earth must build
Through uttermost destruction, reaching toward new life
Blindly, as if aware that out of death may rise
Fulfilment to whatever veiled will
Created conflict—a master-soul unknown.

Such freedom has no voice: it dares not own
The abyss, the horror, of a life made free;
The grandeur which it cannot understand.

Therefore the curtain and the mystery;
Therefore the silence that is No-man's Land.

THEY MARCH THROUGH THE STREETS OF PARIS

America . . .
Can it be, my country, that in you
The dream men dared not dream, is true?
I know not what the old men seek:

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Youth!—steadily tramping, eight abreast,
The Rainbow Division, “Pershing’s Crusaders”—marching
Past the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli:
They go to defense of unknown Picardy.

The black-garbed throng and the men in olive-drab, passing;
The acclaim and—deeper still for those who hear—the song
Of silent voices, rising; the birth of a new music in the world,
Brought by the men of many nations
Come from a new home wrought in a new-made land.

O France, again the debt—but this debt greater;
For to us you bring, after yourself have bled,
The will to suffering—not in a selfish cause.

I know not what the old men seek:
Never to them, always to Youth, you speak,
By being—France!

We come, youth of America, youth dedicate!—
A nation among nations, humble before the hope
Of freedom, proudly to create
Our own tradition there—in Picardy.

THE GERMAN EMPIRE—BISMARCK,
VON MOLTKE

*Night, like a tempest, rends the will of earth,
Braced to a knowledge of the hate ordained
Before new brotherhood.*

Welded by iron, a shackled nation, taught
The consciousness of power without freedom;
Deformed at birth, bidden to strike, enslave,
Forge chain to chain, riveting life to darkness.

Prussia!

We could not know—
Faith waits its proof, confirmed only by blood—
How deep the source, ingenerate the need
That seeks its first grōwth in democracy:
Not till you struck—
A hand menacing all that there was yet to gain
And all that had been gained.

"I will not fight against the youth of Germany."

Our battle is not won, yet will be won;
Not a defeat of men, but of a wrong.

Can they not hear?

Youth cries to youth, above the clash of war:

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The old shall yield before the dream we dream.
Re-find the honor of the Fatherland!

Help us that there may rise
Out of the darkness—Peace with victory!

EPILOGUE

When all is done,
The faith unshaken;
When peace has come,
The well-gained peace:
When comes that day—
The living, lest they may forget too soon,
Shall know we fought against the bondage of our souls.
We fought as one by one,
So suffered we,
And found beneath the larger cause our own,
The unguessed depth and height . . .
Under the stars, under the sky and night,
We descried a vision of what things were true.

.
Backward the surge: time and the day regain
Their mastery. Yet something will remain
Of vision and the quest—the unceasing quest
Toward light, and toward the spirit that creates,
Effacing war.

Cloyd Head

PARIS, 1917

Where is the home of love so dear?
Where but here—yea, here?
Here love and danger snatch the flower
Of life perchance a single hour,
Mate and die.
Here they lie—yea, here!

Here love hath pierced each heart with grief.
Joy so brief—ah, brief!—
Is paid with tears enow. They know,
Our well-beloved, an utter woe
Than death more dread;
They are wed to grief.

None weary of sweet love and dear—
Nay, not here, not here.
Black-veiled as any holy nun
The brides of love and war are done
With love's delight.
Their long, long night is here.

In those who give and those who take
Hearts must break, must break.
Yet give they of themselves twice o'er
Who give to love in time of war,
And lightly bear
Despair for dear love's sake.

Ruth Gaines

THEIR STRANGE EYES HOLD NO VISION

Their strange eyes hold no vision, as a rule;
No dizzy glory. A still look is theirs,
But rather as one subtly vacant stares,
Watching the circling magic of a pool.

Now when the morning firing becomes tame,
Out in the warming sun he tries to guess
Which battery they're after. "Let me see;
Which battery is there? which battery?
I wonder which. . . ." Again, again, the same
Returning question, idle, meaningless.
Startled, he sighs—or laughs—or softly swears;
Mutteringly something of dear names declares
In the bitter cruelty of tenderness.

The planes drift low, circling monotonously,
Droning like many a drowsy bumble-bee
Some summer morning. Only now and then
A whining shell, the mere formality
Of stupid war, calls back his thoughts again.

Suddenly near the unseen death swoops low,
Laughing and singing; and full pitifully
The startled eyes stare wide, but do not see
The whirling features of the genie foe,
Safe in his summoned cloud. The quiet skies
Tell not his surest comings. With waved wands

Howard Buck

A mist springs from the earth, and swaying stands
A veiling moment sinks
And there he lies
Face down, clutching the clay with warm dead hands

Howard Buck

LITANY

Saint Genevieve, whose sleepless watch
Saved threatened France of old,
Above the ship that carries him
Your sacred vigil hold.

Where all the fair green fields you loved
Are scarred with bursting shell,
Joan the Maid who fought for France—
Oh, guard your young knight well.

But if by sea or if by land
God set death in his way—
Then, Mother of the Sacrificed,
Teach me what prayer to pray!

Allene Gregory

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

FLOWERS OF WAR

THE LILIES OF FRANCE

(J. F. S.)

France's lilies are tall and white,
Brave as the dawn, calm as the night;
And fragrantly they sway above
The quiet head of one I love.

Unceasingly these fadeless flowers
Hasten their bloom through the war-swept hours,
And many a lad shall have their foam
Washing with peace his new-found home.

O France's lilies are tall with pride,
Flooding the slopes of the western side.
It comforts me they sway above
The quiet head of one I love.

KNOW THYSELF

I shall not grudge the falling if I may have the fight,
For the soul of man is comfortless unless he prove his might.
Rather my body fall today unnoticed and unsought
Than I should hail tomorrow's dawn with any fight unfought.

Louise Ayres Garnett

COMRADES

Last night I dreamed the Cross of God
Stood rooted deep in Flanders sod,
And wide its open arms were spread
Over the fields of living dead.
Mile upon mile the crosses rose
Shepherding sleep's supreme repose,
And as I looked they seemed to be
Merged into conquering Calvary.
O Jesus—more than Savior now:
Brother, soldier, captain, Thou!—
Each of Thy comrades of the cross
Treasures the gift that man calls loss.
Oh, what an Easter lies concealed
Beneath the flowers on Flanders Field!

Louise Ayres Garnett

HONORS

France counts not blasted trees among her losses,
Nor flowers torn from the valley or hill crest;
For in their stead are rows on rows of crosses—
The which she wears more proudly on her breast!

Antoinette De Coursey Patterson

THE HOPE

The hope I hold
The leering demon-days
Deride, and reason plays,
Snug as a raven on a gallows-tree,
Its ancient game with me,
Flapping its wings and lewdly gibbering,
“Life is a humorous thing!”
But on I fare, clutching—
It is not gold,
The hope I hold.

The hope I hold,
Delicate cruelty
Snatches at, passing by;
And like a vine-leaf, fallen from its place
Upon a tortured face,
Offers its fragrance to betray, sighs low,
“Life is a humorous show!”
But on I fare, clutching—
It is not gold,
The hope I hold.

The hope I hold
Nature herself with glee
Derides. And destiny
With evil goblin laughter indicates

John Cowper Powys

The adamantine gates,
And with a maniac-chuckle rallies me,
"That way is closed, you see!"
But I fare on, clutching—
It is not gold,
The hope I hold.

O hope, whose face in madness I have kissed,
O hope, that art a mirage and a mist,
Shall I destroy thee now, and laugh thereat?—
It is too late for that.

John Cowper Powys

THE KIND HEART

Though I go out in cold and storm
My heart shall keep my body warm.
Though I am humble, though I am poor,
The rich are begging at my door.
I am the least a man may be,
But the great come and kneel to me.

Julia Wickham Greenwood

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THRONES

Golden and green and blue
Is the screen of the Empress' throne;
Golden and green and blue
And the black of ebony.

Green and blue are the peacocks' plumes
Standing to right and left;
Golden and blue and green the silk
Of the high-swung canopy.
Wide and deep is the Empress' throne
Of carven ebony,
With its straight footstool
And its peacocks' fans
And its shadowing mystery.

.
Brown is the slope of the dust-blown hill
And brown the dust-blown plain;
Grey are the guarding dogs of stone
And grey the sentinels.

Grey are the carven shapes that lead
To a carven sepulchre,
Grey is the broken balustrade
And grey the heavy walls.

Wide and deep is the Empress' throne
On that hillside far away,
With its carven dogs

Mary Aldis

And its sentinels
And its mighty door of grey.

O BITTER DAY

O pale small face
I saw a moment in a throng of men,
I am bereft, I am alone!
I seek, but nowhere find again
Your startled grace,
O pale, small face.

*O fearful heart,
Forever questioning, forever dumb,
I weary of your sick mistrust!
Why do you bolt the door when love would come?
Go dwell apart,
O fearful heart!*

O bitter day—
When you looked and passed, you of the pale small face,
You of the sweet tormented eyes,
The eager tread, the startled grace!
Yet I said no word to make you stay—
O bitter, bitter day!

EMBARCATION

Slowly the great wave of a nation's sorrow
Rises and swells and surges.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

From unseen depths it comes,
From very far away.
Silently, relentlessly, it moves
Forward, forward, forward—
Until at last, with a profound reverberation,
It breaks upon the grey, inevitable rock
And falls back, broken into fragments
That seethe in restless foam.

GO FROM ME

O Pain, go from me for a little space!
Leave me to greet the sun-awakened day!
You have companioned me in every place—
Now, for an hour, I would go my way.

I would go forth with lifted eyes and heart
Hearing the blackbird's cry, the lark's delight.
The whole world sings—I must attune my part,
Send my voice ringing down the halls of night.

I have been patient with your dull dead clasp,
Have borne the horror of your fierce embrace;
I have not shrunk from your unceasing grasp
Nor from the lowering pallor of your face.

Now I am weary—I would go my way
One hour alone, to greet the new-born day!

Mary Aldis

THE TRENCHES

The night-fall in the trenches—
The hungry Russian plain
Stretching its endless whiteness
Beneath the bullet's rain.
Those flecks of black and crimson—
Ah, God! the vultures know!—
Are hearts that beat with love and hope
But one short hour ago.

Above the fumes of battle,
Above the shrieks of hell,
The singing of the bullet,
The crashing of the shell,
A dream of gold-green shadows—
Ah, God! the wood-doves know!—
Where you and I walked hand in hand
A thousand years ago!

A. Alondra

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

REDHAW WINDS

FALLTIME

Gold of a ripe oat straw, gold of a southwest moon,
Canada-thistle blue and flimmering larkspur blue,
Tomatoes shining in the October sun with red hearts,
Shining five and six in a row on a wooden fence,
Why do you keep wishes shining on your faces all day long,
Wishes like women with half-forgotten lovers going to
new cities?

What is there for you in the birds, the birds, the birds,
crying down on the north wind in September—acres
of birds spotting the air going south?

Is there something finished? And some new beginning
on the way?

AUTUMN MOVEMENT

I cried over beautiful things, knowing no beautiful thing
lasts.

The field of cornflower yellow is a scarf at the neck of the
copper sunburned woman, the mother of the year, the
taker of seeds.

The northwest wind comes and the yellow is torn full of
holes, new beautiful things come in the first spit of
snow on the northwest wind, and the old things go,
not one lasts.

Carl Sandburg

VALLEY SONG

Your eyes and the valley are memories—
Your eyes fire and the valley a bowl.
It was here a moonrise crept over the timberline;
It was here we turned the coffee-cups upside down.
And your eyes and the moon swept the valley.

I will see you again in a million years.
I will see you again to-morrow.
I will never know your dark eyes again.
These are three ghosts I keep;
These are three sumach-red dogs I run with.

All of it wraps and knots to a riddle:
I have the moon, the timberline, and you.
All three are gone—and I keep all three.

“OLD-FASHIONED REQUITED LOVE”

I have ransacked the encyclopedias,
And slid my fingers among topics and titles,
Looking for you.

And the answer comes slow.
There seems to be no answer.

I shall ask the next banana peddler the who and why of it.
Or—the iceman with his iron tongs gripping a clear cube
in summer sunlight—maybe he will know.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE NEXT CHILD WAITS

I know the city waits . . . the next child waits . . . there
is a great singing Mother.

Our earth of a turning ball—who set it swinging? A great
Nobody? Who put the People down on the wire-grass
wilderness? A great Nobody?

I have listened to the tides of the sea trying to spell the
word. I have walked under tall trees and heard winter
winds trying to write the high sign of it. I have felt
the magnet pull of it under the shoes of my feet in the
dirt of a prairie road.

I know the city waits . . . the next child waits . . . there
is a great singing Mother.

ASSYRIAN TABLETS

From the Fourth Millennium, B.C.—(Free translation)

ASHURNATSIRPAL THE THIRD

Three walls around the town of Tela when I came.
They expected everything of those walls; nobody in the
town came out to kiss my feet.

I knocked the walls down, killed three thousand soldiers,
Took away cattle and sheep, took all the loot in sight,
And burned special captives.

Carl Sandburg

Some of the soldiers—I cut off hands and feet.
Others—I cut off nose, ears, fingers.
Some—I put out the eyes.
I made a pyramid of heads.
I strung heads on trees circling the town.

When I got through with it
There wasn't much left of the town of Tela.

BILBEA

Shamash,
If he knows copper hair
And blood-flower lips,
Shamash watches you
For my sake.

Bilbea, I was in Babylon on Saturday night.
I saw nothing of you anywhere.
I was at the old place and the other girls were there,
But no Bilbea.

Have you gone to another house? or city?
Why don't you write?
I was sorry—I walked home half-sick.

Tell me how it goes.
Send me some kind of a letter.
And take care of yourself.

Carl Sandburg

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

CHROMATICS

THE SONG

That day in the slipping of torsos and straining flanks,
On the bloodied ooze of fields, plowed by iron,
(And the smoke, bluish near earth and gold in the sunshine,
Floating like cotton down)
Do you remember how we heard
All the Red Cross bands on Fifth Avenue,
And bugles in little home towns,
And children's harmonicas bleating
AMERICA!—
And the harsh and terrible screaming,
And that strange vibration at the roots of us—
Desire, fierce like a song?

And after . . .
Do you remember the drollery of the wind on our faces,
And horizons reeling,
And the terror of the plain, heaving like a gaunt pelvis to
the sun
Over us—threshing and twanging
Torn-up roots of the song?

IRON WINE

The ore in the crucible is pungent, smelling like acrid wine.
It is dusky red like the ebb of poppies,

And purple like the blood of elderberries.
Surely it is a strong wine—juice distilled of the fierce iron.
I am drunk of its fumes;
I feel its fiery flux
Diffusing, permeating,
Working some strange alchemy . . .
So that I turn aside from the goodly board,
So that I look askance upon the common cup,
And from the mouths of crucibles
Suck forth the acrid sap.

THE FIDDLER

In a little Hungarian cafe
•Men and women are drinking
Yellow wine in tall goblets.

Through the milky haze of the smoke,
The fiddler, undersized, blond,
Leans to his violin
As to the breast of a woman.
Red hair kindles to fire
On the black of his coat-sleeve,
Where his white, thin hand
Trembles and dives,
Like a sliver of moonlight,
When wind has broken the water.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

DAWN-WIND

Wind, just arisen
(Off what cool matters of marsh-moss
In tented boughs leaf-drawn before the stars,
Or niche of cliff under the eagles?)
You of living things,
So gay and tender and full of play,
Why do you blow on my thoughts—like cut flowers
Gathered and laid to dry, on this paper, rolled out of dead
wood?

I see you
Shaking that flower at me with soft invitation
And frisking away,
Deliciously rumpling the grass . . .

So you fluttered the curtains about my cradle,
Prattling of fields
Before I had had my milk.
Did I stir on my pillow, making to follow you, Fleet One—
I, swaddled, unwinged, like a bird in the egg?

Let be
My dreams that crackle under your breath . . .
You have the dust of the world to blow on.

Do not tag me and dance away, looking back . . .
I am too old to play with you,
Eternal child.

THE EDGE

I

I thought to die that night in the solitude
 where they would never find me . . .
But there was time . . .
And I lay quietly on the drawn knees of the mountain
 staring into the abyss.

I do not know how long . . .
I could not count the hours, they ran so fast—
Like little bare-foot urchins—shaking my hands away.
But I remember
Somewhere water trickled like a thin severed vein . . .
And a wind came out of the grass,
Touching me gently, tentatively, like a paw.

As the night grew
The gray cloud that had covered the sky like sackcloth
Fell in ashen folds about the hills,
Like hooded virgins pulling their cloaks about them . . .
There must have been a spent moon,
For the tall one's veil held a shimmer of silver. . . .

This too I remember,
And the tenderly rocking mountain,
Silence,
And beating stars. . . .

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

II

Dawn

Lay like a waxen hand upon the world,

And folded hills

Broke into a solemn wonder of peaks stemming clear and
cold,

Till the Tall One bloomed like a lily,

Flecked with sun

Fine as a golden pollen.

It seemed a wind might blow it from the snow.

I smelled the raw sweet essences of things,

And heard spiders in the leaves,

And ticking of little feet

As tiny creatures came out of their doors

To see God pouring light into his star.

It seemed life held

No future and no past for me but this.

And I too got up stiffly from the earth

And held my heart up like a cup.

Lola Ridge

COMMENT

JOYCE KILMER

POETRY'S sixth birthday finds the nations still at war, and the United States pouring her armies into the battle-fields of France. But the day is brighter than for four tragic years: the German hordes are beginning the backward sweep which will not end, we may reasonably hope, until the blood-soaked borders of France, Belgium and Italy are delivered from the invader; until—dare we hope so far?—until the Balkan states are set in order, until heroic Serbia is restored, until even chaotic Russia is offered peace to bind up her wounds, and even the German people achieve their freedom.

Our American poets are doing their share in this battle of two epochs, doing it not only with songs, their own weapon, but with guns and grenades as well. We have all read their songs of war, and some of these the future will read. But for their more active labors in the great conflict we must count the stars in their service flag.

Two gold stars shine at the top of the flag which hangs in the poets' window—one for Alan Seeger, American volunteer in the Foreign Legion, who died in France July the fourth, 1916, after nearly two years of service; and now another for Joyce Kilmer, who was killed in action at the Picardy front on August the first. Both these poets were young, though not in their first youth. Seeger, the student and rover, guest of France and her lover, entered her serv-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

ice when the enemy set foot upon her soil, and died for her at twenty-eight. Kilmer, who had just passed thirty, volunteered when his country entered the war, although his responsibilities as a husband and the father of four children would have exempted him from military obligation. He was sent to France last year, and was a sergeant at the time of his death.

Death in battle is for a poet an accolade—it ennobles him, gives him a high significance. At once his songs assume a richer color from the beauty of his devotion, and the people in whose service he died cherish them like jewels. These two young American poets, dying gallantly in a great war, achieve undying fame, and lift the best of their songs toward the sun as if at the tip of a flag in the van of armies. No American can easily forget Seeger's *Rendezvous with Death*, and now Joyce Kilmer's *Trees*, his rhapsodic octave *Poets*, and the more recent *Prayer of a Soldier in France*, will also flash with glory in the eyes of his fellow countrymen.

Our acquaintance with Joyce Kilmer began with *Trees*, which POETRY had the honor of publishing toward the end of its first year—in August, 1913. The delicate quatrain *Easter* followed the next April, and an essay on the poetry of Gerard Hopkins in September. In March, 1917, came *The Blue Valentine*, that lovely tribute "to Aline," and *The Thorn*, a tribute to the holy warrior Saint Michael, who has nobly answered his devotee's prayer:

The Ivory Tower is fair to see,
And may her walls encompass me!

Joyce Kilmer

But when the Devil comes with the thunder of his might,
Saint Michael, show me how to fight!

The poet had a singularly gracious and loyal character, and unusual personal charm. He was, as everyone knows, an enthusiastic convert to Roman catholicism, and his best poems are enriched with deep religious devotion. The rapturous worship of "the grandeur of God," which he praised in Gerard Hopkins, may be found in certain of his own poems—eloquently in *Memorial Day*, *The Rosary*, and the sonnet—so self-prophetic—*In Memory of Rupert Brooke*; more loftily in *The Fourth Shepherd*, *Poets* and the more recent *Prayer*. We quote today in his honor two of these poems, chosen partly because they are less familiar than the lovely *Trees*, but chiefly because his religion was so profoundly the central motive of his life and thought; and moreover, good devotional poetry is of all kinds the rarest nowadays, and these are aflame with the real fire. The first poem is from a recent number of *Good House-keeping*, the second from *Trees and Other Poems* (George H. Doran Co., 1914.)

PRAYER OF A SOLDIER IN FRANCE

My shoulders ache beneath my pack:
(Lie easier, Cross, upon His back).

I march with feet that burn and smart—
(Tread, Holy Feet, upon my heart).

Men shout at me who may not speak.
(They scourged Thy back and smote Thy cheek)

I may not lift a hand to clear
My eyes of salty drops that sear.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

(Then shall my fickle soul forget
Thy Agony of Bloody Sweat?)

My rifle hand is stiff and numb,
(From Thy pierced palm red rivers come).

Lord, Thou didst suffer more for me
Than all the hosts of land and sea.

So let me render back again
This millionth of Thy gift. Amen.

POETS

Vain is the chiming of forgotten bells
That the wind sways above a ruined shrine.
Vainer his voice in whom no longer dwells
Hunger that craves immortal Bread and Wine.

Light songs we breathe that perish with our breath,
Out of our lips that have not kissed the rod.
They shall not live who have not tasted death;
They only sing who are struck dumb by God.

It may be that this latter poem is his finest utterance, finest because of all his songs—so few and brief—it burns with the whitest heat of rapture. It is worthy to be carved upon his tomb.

H. M.

THE OTHER STARS IN THE POETS' FLAG

One after another our poets are sailing for France, or at least are in camp preparing to sail. Arthur Davison Ficke, erstwhile a lawyer in Davenport, is now a major in the Ordnance Reserve Corps, stationed, at last accounts, in Paris. William Rose Benét is a lieutenant in the Aviation

The Other Stars in the Poets' Flag

Section of the Signal Reserve Corps, and Kendall Banning is a major in the War Plans Division, of the General Staff, both recently, if not now, in Washington. C. J. Masseck, of St. Louis, is a Captain of Infantry O. R. C., stationed last spring at Camp Funston. Lieutenant C. L. O'Donnell, of Notre Dame University, is chaplain of the 117th Engineers, already half a year in France. Glenn Ward Dresbach, once a canal-builder at Panama and later a mining engineer at Tyrone, New Mexico, is now an officer—captain, I think—in the Medical Corps. Even Floyd Dell has graduated from *The Masses* into the service.

Of the younger men POETRY has printed, who, so far as we are aware, have not yet achieved shoulder-straps, the list is quite long. H. Thompson Rich, formerly editor of *The Forum*, is an acting sergeant of the Medical Corps, perhaps already transferred to the School of Military Psychology at Camp Greenleaf, Georgia, training in which he hopes may win him a commission. Archie Austin Coates, of New York, who has also been a magazine editor, has become Chief Yeoman in the U. S. Naval Reserve, being on duty in publicity work at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Francis Buzzell, of Chicago, author of poems and short stories, is likewise in the navy, being detailed to the congenial duty of editing the *Great Lakes Recruit*.

A number are in various departments of the medical and ambulance service—Cloyd Head and Willard Wattles on this side, John Black and Robert Redfield, Jr., on the other, though the latter has been invalided home. Dr. Frank S.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Gordon was rejected for this service because of two pounds underweight.

Baker Brownell, Louis Gilmore, Earl B. Marlatt, Mark Turbyfill, John Pierre Roche, and Morris Gilbert are in different camps or perhaps on their way to the front. Salomon de la Selva, the Nicaraguan poet, being refused by Uncle Sam, sailed last month for England, having succeeded in enrolling himself in the British army. John McClure wrote last spring of soon going into training, and Dean B. Lyman, Jr. was to enlist last summer.

J. E. Scruggs, of Atlanta, wrote us when on the point of going to camp, "I passed up my chance of being an officer because I wanted to feel the thrill of being a private—a conscripted private;" and he has now achieved his desire in the 52nd Infantry. John B. Weaver, of Chicago, is impatient of ordnance training, longs to "get over and be a real part in this wonderful affair—certainly, if I survive the experience, it will have been the most valuable thing that could have come into my life." And Paul B. Sifton, of Montana, wrote from France a year ago:

At the time of taking the soldiers' oath I thought to gain color for future writings. Now that I am here, close to the quivering, wide-gaping wound of War, I have put the thought from me, for a time at least—perhaps for good, if my life is necessary in the caging of the imperialists. If I come out—pathos, hate, lust, abnegation, I shall have known them all.

Others are in the Red Cross or the Y. M. C. A. or in work for college men in the army—William Griffith, Lee Wilson Dodd, Raymond P. Holden, perhaps more. Nor must we forget the women, at least two of whom, Miss

The Other Stars in the Poets' Flag

Gladys Cromwell of New York, and Miss Eloise Robinson of Cincinnati, are doing canteen work in France.

Of course there are soldiers also among POETRY's British contributors. Rupert Brooke and Edward Thomas head the list, having given the last proof of devotion. Ford Madox Hueffer and Richard Aldington have been at the front two or three years, also Frederic Manning and Isaac Rosenberg, all of whom have sent us war poems. A few months ago F. S. Flint was accepted and sent to Flanders, and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, after three rejections, succeeded in getting into the ranks.

For all these, and any other poets who may take their share of the hazardous adventure, let us who write and read this record wish high service to the cause we are fighting for, and a safe return when victory is won.

H. M.

"AESTHETIC AND SOCIAL CRITICISM"

Mr. Bourne and Mr. Brooks were so polite, in their letter to the editors in our September number, that exceptions to their points seem almost a discourtesy. We are appalled at the danger of losing our equilibrium, and being once more accused of "rushing jealously and angrily to the defense of [our] contributors at the sign of any fancied slight." (Dear readers, were we angry or jealous? and did we merely fancy a slight in Mr. Bourne's slur upon "the vogue of the little theatres and little magazines?" And

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

did we defend, or even mention, a single contributor in our effort to show Mr. Bourne that those *Traps for the Unwary*, which bother him so much, are not formidable?)

He now explains that "in appealing for more careful and better oriented criticism he did the new poetry and the little magazines the honor of assuming that they had arrived." Well, we never dreamed that anyone could doubt our arrival, and were in no fear of being "destroyed by a rude touch." What we objected to was the rudeness of the touch, its way of putting us in our place, as a critical journal, among the un-careful and un-orienting. (Again, dear readers, we will leave it to you whether POETRY has treated the art as "shut up in its own world," or as "an expression of life, pregnant with possibilities." Perhaps Mr. Bourne has not been one of your select company!)

As for that "developing orthodoxy of the new," where have these two gentlemen found it in POETRY, whose critical articles have covered a wide range of opinion, from Ezra Pound to Louis Untermeyer? By way of illustrating that "better and more oriented criticism," they solemnly inform us that "there is no way, for instance, of knowing yet where Mr. Lindsay will come out;" and ask "who, in the little circle of poetry missionaries, points out to him the dangers of mere verblatity and the imperative need of growth." Well, ask Mr. Lindsay who has been his sternest censor against verblatity and other dangers. As to the imperative need of growth, probably he requires no information on that rather obvious and universal need.

"Aesthetic and Social Criticism"

But these are trifles—let us pass on to the main point of our correspondents' argument, their complaint that "this public"—the new poetry's public—"enthusiastic and hospitable, seems to be still moving hazily in a mist of values and interpretations, for it still gets aesthetic instead of social criticism." The phrase tempts one toward a subject much befogged by careless thinking and still more careless writing, that of the poet's—or, more comprehensively, the artist's—business. The subject is ancient but undying; and if our inquiry becomes platitudinous it will not be the first time, nor yet the last, that such questions have run up against the obvious.

The artist is born to express the beauty of life. The first essential in this, his business, is that he should feel this beauty—feel it perhaps more keenly, more profoundly than his fellow-creatures; the second, that he should be able to express his feeling. Now the beauty of life is a large subject, embracing not only the people now on earth—with their social frame-work, their natural environment of land, water, air, and their spiritual equipment of emotion and desire, all set in the midst of a solar system and a sidereal universe and other infinities of creative passion: embracing not only all this, but also infinities past and future, material and spiritual—mysteries which stagger the imagination. Each artist, being, like the rest of us, incapable of infinity, feels and expresses that special beauty which is most immediate to his consciousness. He has an inalienable right to his speciality, as good a right as the honey-bee or the brick-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

layer; and the critic's function is to demand of him, not some other specialty, but sincerity and achievement in the one which has chosen him.

These generalities lead to the question what Mr. Brooks and Mr. Bourne mean by "social criticism" in the arts. An artist *may* find his special beauty in the social movements of our time—in strikes, or war, or pacifism, or settlements, or the Bolsheviki; but has the critic any right to complain if he finds it, like Whistler, in the fall of a rocket or the turn of a girl's figure, or, like Inness, in a sunset drift of autumnal colors? Of the lyric or the landscape painter, and to the same degree of the lyric or the landscape poet—say Orrick Johns and John Gould Fletcher—the critic has a right to measure the degree of success in expressing the vision; that is, he has a right to "aesthetic criticism." But were he to indulge in "social criticism"—were he to rebuke, let us say, George Inness for not painting Lincoln, or H. D. for not singing the battle of the Marne—he would be uttering the too common kind of banalities which make "the public still move hazily in a mist of values."

The artist, of course, can express only himself. If his vision is limited by the drawing-room, his utmost achievement will be a delicate miniature or a finely turned *vers de société*. If his vision embraces the mediaeval world and its religion, his achievement will be a *Divina Commedia*. The critic may rank the artist and define his work, but it is easier by thinking to find out God than by criticizing to change a poet's scope and product. The critic may legiti-

"Aesthetic and Social Criticism"

mately indulge in "discussion of a larger scope," examine the art "in relation to the larger movement of ideas and social movements and the peculiar intellectual and spiritual color of the time;" but his discussion, if it is just, will have to estimate values at last by the strictly aesthetic standard. The poem or picture will stand by its aesthetic adequacy in the triumphant expression of the vision in the artist's soul, whether this vision be minute or cosmic. And if it is aesthetically inadequate the most illuminating social wisdom will not save it.

But "social criticism" in the arts is probably more befogging to the critic and his public than to the artist. The artist, big or little, is in his degree a seer; and it may be that he sees deeper than the critic who is obsessed by "the movements of the time." It may be that Verlaine's prison song, or a single drawing of a nude or a tree by Arthur Davies, have more importance in the eternal scheme of beauty, and are more interpretive of their age, than the most shapely revelation of contemporary movements. Movements pass, but beauty endures. Our age will endure in the beauty it creates, and in that beauty its essential movement will be expressed. It may be—as indeed I believe—that certain of our living poets will be remembered in that ultimate record; but if they fail it will be through lack of power to feel or to express, or both, and not through lack of social criticism.

H. M.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

REVIEWS

WILD SWANS

The Wild Swans at Coole, Other Verses and a Play in Verse, by W. B. Yeats. The Cuala Press, Dundrum, Ireland.

For a poet with such a personality as Yeats, it seems almost indecorous to bare it before us, in the midst of our social, political and literary lives. Yeats makes poetry out of the fact that he is a proud, sensitive, cultivated Irishman. He hardly has to make poetry—except the rhymes, which don't matter; he just lets his heart talk, as in the poems about the dying lady.

In a despondent mood, the poet, like some of the admirers of his earlier manner, longs for the leopards of the moon, and complains of the harsh and timid sun. Whatever the lights are of *Ego Dominus Tuus*, *Presences*, *Men Improve With Years*, *The Collarbone of a Hare*, *The Fisherman*, *The Hawk*, they shine. The invading hawk too, if not indecorous, is unfair, as unfair as some similarly naive passages in the Bible are:

What tumbling cloud did you cleave,
Yellow-eyed hawk of the mind,
Last evening? that I who had sat
Dumbfounded before a knave,
Should give to my friend
A pretence of wit.

The weighing and measuring, the critical care evidently spent on this thin volume, save the reviewer most of his labor. If the longer poems seem to him, in spite of their

shrewdness and spells of passion, somewhat old-fashioned, he is willing to bend to the opinion of the author of the others. One can not but pay reverence to a poet who, after having written poetry for many years, can still be read with the same critical alertness that one would give to the best of the younger poets. And if there is a drooping line here and there, the author is too proud, too able, and too conscientious to arouse misgivings that he will ever bank on his reputation.

Here is Yeats in a very gentle mood:

PRESENCES

This night has been so strange that it seemed
As if the hair stood up on my head:
From going-down of the sun I have dreamed
That women laughing, or timid or wild,
In rustle of lace or silken stuff,
Climbed up my creaking stair. They had read
All I had rhymed of that monstrous thing
Returned and yet unrequited love.
They stood in the door and stood between
My great wood lecturn and the fire,
Till I could hear their hearts beating.
One is a harlot, and one a child
That never looked upon man with desire,
And one it may be a queen.

In *Ego Dominus Tuus*, the beautiful poetic dialogue which appeared first in POETRY and is reprinted here and in his latest prose volume, the poet would have us believe that great poems are the result of the poet's "opposite" image—an expression of what the poet is not. I think this opposite, and not his little every-day thoughts and actions, is the poet; Dowson's drunkenness, and Dante's lecherous

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

life, are somewhat beside the mark, as their effects on the poet's soul are mainly those of health and sickness. They are ethical and civil sins, but hardly poetic *sins*. Their scars on the poet are not of the same character as Turner's miserliness, or as malice, envy, etc. But even these, when present, are hardly more than masks of the poet's soul—perhaps hardly more than masks of any soul; it is in his poems that the real soul can be seen. Nor is indulgence due, as Yeats thinks, to the poet's desire to escape from himself; but rather, in so far as it is more than mere exhaustion, due to his desire to find himself. It is the disappointment with pleasure, and life's egging on.

At the Hawk's Well, beautiful as it is as poetry and as a poetic play, does not to me seem to be a Noh play in the full sense of the term. The Noh play is based on something nearer to the lives of the Japanese people than a legend. A modern Noh play, to have a similar appeal, would have to be based on something nearer the lives of the Irish people. A play based on Davitt or Parnell might come nearer the Japanese; or, perhaps best, a play based on something in modern life treated mystically. But it has the great merit of being the first attempt at a Noh play in English.

M. M.

A RHAPSODIST

Children of the Sun—Rhapsodies and Poems, by Wallace Gould. Cornhill Press, Boston.

This book arouses widely different feelings and opinions—a sign of vitality. Recently Mr. Marsden Hartley re-

proached me for neglecting it; so I opened the copy on our shelves and found, to my regret, that I had never actually read it—I had merely given it a glance and postponed the reading, being antagonized by pages like this, strung out without a single kindly comma:

Then I grasped the silver bowl.
Around an handle of the bowl
coiled the viper, gaping, hissing—
and the viper hissed unheard
for the music shrieked
and wailed
and groaned
and trilled
and rumbled
and crashed
and throbbed
and throbbed
and throbbed
and became a din
and again I gasped
and paused
and laughed.

Returning repentantly to the book, I found that a number of poets, looking it over, had obeyed the office rule to record their first very casual impressions. Carl Sandburg wrote: "A vast sincerity here—a beating of wings." Another poet, even better known, wrote, "Mind-wanderings." A third, Max Michelson, was more detailed, saying:

Amateurish. Indian legend poor—Longfellowish. Second rhapsody best (but hardly more than material) and cat pieces near the end. *Out of season* has good plot, though not new, and in places shows courageous understanding, but on the whole it is outrageous sentimentalism; his sympathy for the cripple is bad as art and bad as truth; the murder in the end, and much of the rest is absolutely meaningless. But the book carries the reader—shows possibilities, glimpses. Here and there something is brooding—not brought out.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

And then there is Mr. Hartley's opinion, one not to be disregarded because the poet is his friend—since friendship sharpens, oftener than it dulls, the critical faculty. I quote fragments from his letter:

Wallace Gould is the first distinctive poet of Maine, the first to express that state; and his voice is as authentic as the life of the place itself. I can think of no one who is so engrossed with the idea of the elimination of personal interpretation. He spends most of his time pruning to the very last, and as he has scarcely ever been out of that state, his writings have the ring of absolute character. As I was also born in Maine, I know just how actual they are in their import as well as in treatment. . . . He has a striding terrific imagination. . . . Kreymborg likes his work very much, also Sherwood Anderson, Waldo Frank, and others who have seen it privately. He is a dramatic figure in the American literary world, and one day his story will be a telling one.

So I began at the beginning, and swung along with the poet to the end. I forgot—perhaps with some difficulty—his typographical mannerisms, and tried to attune my ear and feeling to the rhythmic effects he intends by his triple repetitions of two-word lines and other rather empirical phrasings and line-divisions.

Well, I can't say that I get Maine from this book, or any special locale, even when the subjects are most specifically from Maine. The poet seems to me, in his degree, essentially spiritual, and remote from any locale. *Ab Uno Disce Omnes*, for example, has a certain spectral quality, an intensity of spiritual solitude. Its rush of repeated short lines, alternated with passages of reverberating long ones, has a strong cumulative effect, for which the analogies are closer, probably, in music—Mr. Gould is also a musician—than in poetry. I don't feel that this cumulative effect works

up, in this long poem, to a sufficient and justifying climax. The end trails off too much like the rest of it. The poet hasn't achieved the final stroke, it seems to me—pounded in the last nail.

In form, this poem is a brilliant étude in strongly marked and resolutely contrasted rhythms, probably the most brilliant in the book. I don't think Mr. Gould's rhythms are subtle, any more than his choice and grouping of the words which their movement carries. But they are large, sweeping, powerful; they sink their craft to a whisper and lift it to a resonant shout, and bring it to port with a possibly too obvious ease. This danger of obviousness is perhaps most evident in *The Legend*, which opens the book, whose alternations of blank verse with repetitive phrase-rhythms, if not quite "Longfellowish," are far less interpretive of the Indian, in every way more traditional and less profound, less grown-up, than Dr. Gordon's *Sa-a Narai* and *The Tom-tom*, Miss Skinner's *Songs of the Coast-dwellers*, or certain Chippewa poems by Mr. Lew Sarett, which POETRY will have the honor of presenting to its readers next month. The comparison may not be quite fair, because Mr. Gould is telling a story about the Indian while the others are uttering the Indian's own song; but the fact remains that from the aboriginal hint he draws merely a pretty story, and though he tells it with dramatic effectiveness in resonant rolling chords of sound, he does not impress upon it any very special original tang.

Out of Season, the story of the armless man and the friend

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

whose life he saved and whom he finally murders, seems to me melodrama, the least convincing section of the book and the most labored in its motive and its rhythmic treatment. It may be one of those "dark spots of Maine" which Mr. Hartley thinks his friend is revealing, but I must give it up and pass on to the final section of the book, the fifty or more short poems called *Others, Nameless*.

Here there is more of Maine. Also, the poems being shorter and more within the range of common experience, I can perhaps quote a few and let the poet persuade our readers so far as he is able. (I shall not venture to change his typography, much as I should like to.) We have a picture of Augusta, "city of dignity, city of old mansions;" and of the Kennebec, "famous, lovely, sensuous, immense, a bit indolent:"

I know the dreams of the Kennebec
For the forms of my fathers appear in those dreams.

The poet pictures his "wonderful garden," where "everything runs wild, and lists its flowers; but:

Today these things all drip with sounding, unceasing rain.
The leaves are all twitching, pelted with big drops—
Yes, everything runs wild
For everything I love I leave alone.

Then he gets further out into the open, hears the bobolink, "free to sing and go," and feels the wind:

—the sensual, humming, fitful wind as fitful, constant and strong as
the wind of the sea,
humming like the wind of the sea,
and sensual as the wind of the sea
though smelling of apple-blossoms

A Rhapsodist

and all the new things drenched with days of-rain and steaming
 beneath a triumphant sun—
steaming and glowing
at hand and afar
for miles
and miles—
hills of glowing green,
swamps of glowing green
all swept by the wind so like the wind of the sea,
the uncommanded wind.

The poems become more personal and reminiscent—love-songs, summer-beach descriptions, songs of

—my sad old mother
hid in her chamber,
silently weeping
the last of her sorrows,
the sorrow of absence.

And he enters the house with its “dark sweet rooms,” its furniture “dark and some of it old.”

My mother, myself and my cat are happy there, but only when
 I am there.

We have a description of the garden made weird by moonlight:

Last night I went, alone, and lingered in my old, wild garden
where there were scarlet poppy-women, passionate, who scorned the
 moon's mock potency;
where there were blue, closed cornflowers who waited for their
 chosen lord, in chastity;
where there were columbines who made a cuckold of the sun—
 accepting dew-jewels from the moon;
where there were many weeds—
and the winds which came from the somewheres of the south
stirred the odors of mint
and of roses
and of heliotrope
and were hot

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

and the moon was crossed by a smear of vapor-yellow and thin—
and was as teasing as a nipple protruding through lace.

The poet celebrates swimming by moonlight, describes the "shimmering pearls and purples of winter," loves the rain "for its thousands of sounds and its liveliness in cutting the air," tells of the summer people "gibbering foolishly along the wharf," gives a story of "Madame singing," with a note like a "summer moon lolling on an ebbing tide;" gloats over his pied cat, with "white feet twinkling like stars." And he has a poem about an old woman which seems to me one of the best in the book, and one of the most characteristic. Here it is, all but the last few lines; for, like many another poet, Mr. Gould has a way of going on after his poem is finished:

She was an old free woman, forsaken.
She walked along the highroad, humming, looking below upon the
Sabbath-sleepy city which glimmered in the westward light of
an afternoon of September
and she saw that the world had collapsed
and she looked upon the ruins of the world
and they were yellow
and white
and brown
and she turned from the highroad into a logging-road
and began to wander
and began to murmur
and she murmured, in a kind of song,
scattering white-plumed seeds as she wandered—
"There is peace in the woods this afternoon, dear!
There is peace in the woods this afternoon, my child!
'Tis quieted!
'Tis easier to die!
"Where are you now, dear?
Where are you now, my child?

A Rhapsodist

Child, I am alone!
Child, I am wandering—alone—alone—where the weeds and vines
are broken down and entangled
and tarnished!
Child, I am weeping!
Child, I am growing old!
Oh, the dead weeds rasp
and the dead vines rattle
and I love you!
Child, I love you!
Child, I am growing old!"

There is, as Carl Sandburg says, "a vast sincerity here, a beating of wings." If *only* the wings would oftener carry one somewhere, if only their beating were not so often a mere ineffectual repetition of phrases and sounds, Mr. Gould would register more strongly his proud soaring spirit and his powerful baritone voice. As the book stands, it is a mixture of the prosaic, the banal, the grandiose, the sprawling, with a true poetic strain—a poetic quality of imagination, expressed, at its best, in a chanting rhythm of strong cumulative power. The poems lack architectural structure: they spread all over the ground instead of concentrating; they trail off instead of shaping to a climax. But there is a spirit in them which, if it is only capable of self-discipline, is on the way to achieve a rich and exuberant beauty.

H. M.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

LEWISOHN ON FRENCH POETS

The Poets of Modern France, by Ludwig Lewisohn. B. W. Huebsch.

This book will be of great value to those who are eager to know more about the various movements in modern French poetry. There are few competent studies of this subject in English, and Mr. Lewisohn ranges over a wider field than Miss Lowell aimed at in her *Six French Poets*. He gives us an interesting introduction dealing with the struggle of man toward self-hood in art, saying:

The pang of beauty, the exaltation in truth, the vision of the tragedy of life, arise, in the fullest sense, only when the individual liberates himself from the tribe and faces the universe alone.

And, in speaking of the poet as that individual, he tells us that the very splendor of traditional associations, the throb of a thousand voices, paralyze him, that "he is like a stripling running a race in the brocades of an ancient king."

We learn to distinguish the forerunners of Symbolism. The author analyzes the Parnassien Leconte de Lisle, and the "modified Parnassien" Charles Baudelaire; and discusses Gustave Kahn, Paul Verlaine and the acknowledged founder of Symbolism, Stéphane Mallarmé. He traces with rare insight the reaction, for a long time so little understood, which brought out Emile Verhaeren and Henri de Régnier; afterwards Jean Moréas and the two Americans Francis Vielé-Griffin and Stuart Merrill; a little later Albert Samain and Rémy de Gourmont; and finally the younger poets who trail its ideals into the present time. Of the latter are Paul Fort, who acknowledges his debt to Moréas; Fran-

cis Jammes; Pierre Louys, whom the author calls a Neo-Parnassien; Edmond Rostand, "a descendant of Lamartine and Hugo;" and others. The youngest group of all—André Spire, Charles Vildrac, Georges Duhamel, etc.—have dropped tradition completely, he tells us, and are cultivating free verse. He explains that practically all of the poets of modern France (he names exceptions) have hitherto withdrawn into houses of revery, and his plea is for an awakening to more rugged realities in the French poetry to come.

After reading what Mr. Lewisohn has to say in his excellent preface relative to the translating of poetry, I hoped to find in his own interpretations of this "dusk and dawn of the mind" a fine exception to the general rule. But the old pitfalls are apparent, even in his illuminating work, though he has succeeded with many poems which have been failures in other hands. He has caught the spirit of Verhaeren, especially in *The Mill*, which is exceedingly well done. One might rather say that he, like Verhaeren, has caught the spirit of the mill. But in some of the renderings there is an obvious effort to "get around" a word, an expression; as in his version of that lovely thing by Moréas, *A Young Girl Speaks*. *Apparition*, one of the better known of Mallarmé's poems (one may never say popular in speaking of his work) and one of the most difficult to fit into English, has been faithfully worked out. I think I have never read a more literal translation, word for word, line for line, being amazingly there; not, however, the fresh

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

music of the original. And lovers of Verlaine will hardly be satisfied with:

O you who stand here full of tears
That flow and flow,
What have you done with the lost years
Of long ago?

as an attempt to voice as pure a lyricism as was ever uttered—that piercing heart-cry:

Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà,
Pleurant sans cesse,
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse?

But the charm of Verlaine's thought is, perhaps more than that of any other French poet, dependent for its most subtle expression upon the medium of his own language.

One wonders why Maeterlinck should be represented by two of his poorest poems when the author might have enriched this collection by choosing two of his best. The same may be said of Fernand Gregh's *Doubt*. Why have included this when there was at hand lavish material for beauty? Gregh is a member of the Academy, and one of the striking figures in French poetry to-day. His *Maison de l'Enfance* is a masterpiece and others of his poems are important and beautiful. There are poems by Francis Jammes, Paul Fort's lyric of the dead girl and his *Images of Our Dreams*—the latter, as in the original, in rhyme, but printed as prose. Verlaine's *Song Without Words* is very lovely in its English setting, and I wish I had the space to quote from some of these distinguished lyrics which have stood the test of translating.

The sketches of the thirty poets give this book an imperative claim to be on every book-shelf. If you would find out the titles of all the books a French poet who has appealed to you has written, if you would learn something definite about another of whom you have heard only vaguely, Mr. Lewisohn's carefully prepared biographies and bibliography are admirably at your service

Agnes Lee Freer

CORRESPONDENCE

LETTERS FROM FRANCE

We cannot forbear quoting for the benefit of our readers portions of recent letters from poets at the front. The first is from Miss Eloise Robinson, who is "on active service" in the canteen work of the Y. M. C. A. She writes, under date of August 5th:

I wish I might tell you of my visit to the French front, and how for two nights I slept in a "cave" with seven Frenchmen and had a hundred bombs dropped on top of me. Not directly on top, of course. The nearest hit just in front of the house. And for five days and nights after that I was taking chocolate to advance batteries, to men who can never leave their guns, even to come to the *Foyer du Soldat*. The Foyer was only a dug-out, and the air was so thick with flies and smoke that it looked like jam. Every morning when I got up I literally had to pry myself out of the mud—of course there were no beds. And at that I wanted to stay. There is a great satisfaction about actually doing something with your hands for these men. But I was long overdue in Paris, because we were not able to get through the barrage—the drive had just started. Aren't our boys doing wonderful things? At a cost, though.

I leave tonight for the Swiss border. And after that, Italy, and then the Polish-American front. It is all one mad scramble, but wonderful—simply wonderful. I cannot be too thankful I was able to come.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

In an earlier letter—July 23rd—Miss Robinson tells a story:

Apropos of just nothing at all, unless it be that I am a little homesick for the last *Poetry*, which hasn't reached me yet, I extracted a story from Miss Mary Lawton, who is "over here" as one of the Y. M. C. A. entertainers.

She had given a reading before some of the soldiers, and they were buzzing around her, after it was over, as they generally do.

"I say," one of them ventured, "that was a pretty poem you recited—that one about Verdun, you know."

"You liked it then?" said Miss Lawton.

"Yes, ma'am, I sure did. But then, I like poetry anyway—I always did. I'm not much of a fighter. Oh, I want to help put the Kaiser out of business, all right—that's what we're over here for and I guess none of us are going to be satisfied till we do it. But—well, you know what I mean. I'm naturally just kind of quiet and peaceful. I like to read, and poetry is my favorite."

"It's my favorite too," Miss Lawton admitted.

"Is that a fact? Maybe you'd be interested in hearing about my room at home then?"

"Indeed I should."

"Maybe it sounds funny, but I'm going to miss that room more than most anything else. I guess there isn't another like it anywhere. It was my own idea too. It's a pretty good-sized room, with lots of windows. But that isn't what I like about it best. Once when I was a little tad I saw a piece in the paper—poetry it was. I don't ever remember reading any poetry before, but I liked that piece. It was about Lincoln. I thought I would paste it up on my wall where I could have it handy. It's there yet—right up over my wash-stand. After that I kept on seeing things I liked and pasting them up, and now—maybe you wouldn't believe it, but that whole wall is all covered over. I can just lie in bed, or just stand around, and read all sorts of things. When I feel one way I read one poem, and when I feel different I read another kind. There was a man came out our way—I live in Idaho—a traveling salesman he was, and he gave me a little book of poems. Maybe you've seen it—it's called *Poetry, a Magazine of Verse*. Some of the best pieces were on the backs of each other, and I couldn't bear to spoil them, so I just tacked the whole book up. Yes, I guess I'll miss that room a good deal."

Letters from France

Isn't that a merry tale, and wouldn't you like to know what number of *Poetry* is hanging on his wall, and what kind of a traveling salesman it was who gave it to him?

Another letter is from Malcolm W. Vaughn, a young poet to whom we had sent a copy of *The New Poetry*. He writes:

I have had very little to read since arriving in this country, yet I have needed reading more than ever before. Perhaps that is one reason why the poems in this book have so deeply entered my consciousness. Some of them were read in a ridiculously lighted cave to the other fellows in my section. Others I read to two boys in a hospital, two boys almost dying of homesickness, and the sudden thrusting of themselves from out the warm light of affection which surrounded them in civil life. Some of them I saved just for myself, and dared not read them aloud lest I might be thought an hysterical soldier. Others—like the *Choricos* of Aldington—have shuddered with me along night-roads, and through their bold beauty have saved me from terror at moments when one of the great shocks—the explosion of an enemy shell, the sudden presence of pain or awful agony, the nearness of death—fell without preface upon me.

I remember once particularly, in the drab light of a cloudy dawning, when I saw near the edge of the road a poilu quietly lying. I should have fainted, I think, from the sheer tragedy of the incident had I not heard singing in my head Aldington's invocation to Death. I went closer, stopping my ambulance; and found that the man had given himself extreme unction. For some time during that frozen night, he, mortally wounded, had caught two plain little sticks in his hand and had crossed them. Holding them thus in his stiffening fingers he had made the sign of the cross over his heart, and died in the faith.

The Sign of the Cross! One man had made it over himself. The Sign of the Cross! France has made it over the bosom of her beloved land. And America too is to make it. . . .

But I would not have it otherwise. Too long have we received the blessings from the pyre and made no sacrifice thereon ourselves. It is the full moment, and I am glad to witness it, when we shall offer, like Abraham, whatever son is needed.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

NOTES

Miss Eloise Robinson, of Cincinnati, who is now doing canteen work in France, is becoming widely known as a poet although she has not yet published a volume. *Fatherland* recently received one of the annual prizes given by the Poetry Society of America to the two favorite poems read at monthly meetings through the year.

Mr. Cloyd Head, of Chicago, is now in Washington, serving in the Medical Supply Depot. Mr. Head's play, *Grotesques*, received last year POETRY's highest award, the Helen Haire Levinson Prize.

Mr. Carl Sandburg, of Chicago, another Levinson prize-winner, will soon publish, through Henry Holt & Co., his second book of poems, *Corn-huskers*. Mr. Sandburg is now in New York, hoping to sail soon for Stockholm, whither he has been sent by the Newspaper Enterprise Association for the duration of the war.

Mrs. Aldis and Mrs. Garnett, of Chicago, and Mrs. Patterson, of Philadelphia, need no introduction to the readers of POETRY. Miss Ruth Gaines, of New York, who has been near the front as a member of the Smith College Relief Unit, is an earlier contributor.

Of the poets new to our readers:

Miss Lola Ridge is an Australian by birth, but has been for some years a resident of Brooklyn, N. Y. Her first book of verse will soon be published by B. W. Huebsch.

Mr. John Cowper Powys, the well-known English lecturer, is the author of *Mandragora* (G. Arnold Shaw, 1917).

Miss Allene Gregory, of Urbana, is an instructor in the English department of the University of Illinois. Julia Wickham Greenwood (Mrs. A. C.), born in Richmond, Va., but now a resident of Gibraltar, is the author of *From Dawn to Eve* (Badger). And Mr. A. Alondra lives in Madeira. Mr. Howard Buck, of New Haven, Conn., has been in active service at the front.

Books received will be listed next month.

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The Director of Publicity of the Fourth Liberty Loan Campaign Committee has asked us for rhymes to promote the present drive. The Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A. have made similar requests. Therefore we notify all poets and rhymesters that this office will receive and read rhymes of not more than ten lines sent in for any of these purposes, and will pass on to the various Directors of Publicity all which seem good enough to be of use.

Envelopes should be marked "Publicity Rhymes." We can not return rhymes unless a self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed.

 Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

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THE BLUE DUCK

A Chippewa Medicine Dance

H I'! Hi! Hi'! Hi!
Hi'! Hi! Hi'! Hi!

*To be read with a vigorous
lilt emphasizing the drum-beats*

Hee'-ya! Hói-ya!

Hee'-ya! Hói-ya!

Keetch'-ie, Má-ni-dó, Má-ni-dó,

'The hunter-moon is chipping at his flints,

At his dripping bloody flints;

He is rising for the hunt,

And his face is red with blood

From the spears of many spruces,

And his blood is on the leaves that flutter down.

The Winter-maker, Beé-bo-an',

Is walking in the sky,

And his windy blanket rustles in the trees.

He is blazing out the trail

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Through the fields of nodding rice
For the swift and whistling wings
Of his She-shé-be,
For the worn and weary wings
Of many duck—
Ho! plenty duck! plenty duck!
Ho! plenty, plenty duck!

Hi'! Hi!

Hi'! Hi!

Hoy-eeeeé! Ya!

Hoy-eeeeé! Ya!

Keetch'-ie, Má-ni-dó, Má-ni-dó,

The seasons have been barren.

In the moon of flowers and grass,

From the blighted berry patches

And the maple-sugar bush,

The hands of all my children

Came home empty, came home clean.

And the big rain of Nee-bín, the summer-maker,

Washed away the many little pa'tridge.

And even Ad-ik-kum'-aig, sweetest white-fish,

Went sulking all the summer moon,

Hiding in the deepest waters,

Silver belly in the mud;

And he would not walk into my nets. Ugh!

Thus the skin-sacks and the mo'-kuks

Hang within my teepee empty.

*More slowly and quietly,
verging on a chant*

Lew R. Sarett

Soon the winter moon will come,
Slipping through the silent timber,
Walking on the silent snow,
Stalking on the frozen lake.

Slower—chant rising to a wail

Lean-bellied,
Squatting with his rump upon the ice,
The phantom wolf will fling his wailings to the stars.
Then Wéen-di-go, the Devil-spirit,
Whining through the lodge-poles,
Will clutch and shake my teepee,

Calling,

Melancholy wailing from this point on—higher and higher in pitch

Calling,

Calling as he sifts into my lodge;
And ghostly little shadow-arms
Will float out through the smoke-hole, in the night—
Leaping, tossing shadow-arms,
Little arms of little children,
Hungry hands of shadow-arms,
Clutching,
Clutching,
Clutching at the breast that is not there . . .

Shadow-arms and shadow-breasts,

Twisting,

Twisting,

Twisting in and twisting out,
On the ghastly clouds of smoke . . .

Riding on the whistling wind . . .

Riding on the whistling wind . . .

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Riding on the whistling wind . . .

Starward.

Blow, blow, blow, Kee-wáy-din, North-wind,

Warm and gentle on my children,

Cold and swift upon the wild She-shé-be!

Ha-a-ah-eeeeee-oooooooooooo . . . Plenty duck . . .

Ha-a-a-ah-eeeeeee-oooooooooooo . . . Plenty duck . . .

Hi'! Hi! Hi'! Hi!

Hi'! Hi! Hi'! Hi!

*Faster, with a lilt.
Dancing rhythm*

Keetch'-ie, Má-ni-dó, Má-ni-dó,

Blow on Ah-bi-tee'-bi many wings:

Wings of teal and wings of mallard,

Wings of green and blue.

My little lake lies waiting,

Singing for her blust'ry lover;

Dancing on the golden stranded shore

With many little moccasins,

Pretty little moccasins,

Beaded with her silver sands,

And with her golden pebbles.

And upon her gentle bosom

Lies Mah-no'-min, sweetest wild-rice,

Green and yellow,

Rustling blade and rippling blossom.

Hi-yee! Hi-yee! Blow on Ah-bi-tee'-bi plenty duck!

Ho! Plenty duck! Ho! Plenty duck!

Lew R. Sarett

Hi'! Hi! Hi'! Hi! Hi'! Hi! Hi'! Hi!
Hee'-ya! Hoi'-ya! Hee'-ya! Hoi'-ya! *Faster and louder*
—with abandon

Keetch'-ie, Má-ni-dó, Má-ni-dó,

I place this pretty duck upon your hand;

Upon its sunny palm and in its windy fingers.

Hi-yee! Blue and beautiful is he, beautifully blue;

Carved from sleeping cedar

When the stars like silver fishes

Were a-quiver in the rivers of the sky;

Carved from dripping cedar

When the Koo'-koo-koo' dashed hooting

At the furtive feet that rustled in the leaves,

And seasoned many moons, many moons!—

Ho! seasoned many, many, many sleeps!

Hi-yee! Blue and beautiful is he, beautifully blue.

Though his throat is choked with timber,

And he honks not on his pole,

And his wings are weak with hunger,

Yet his heart is plenty good!

Hi-yee! Hi-yee! His heart is plenty good, plenty good!

Hi-yee! Hi-yee! Hi-yee! His heart is good!

My heart like his is good!

Ugh! My tongue is straight!

Ho!

Ho!

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

CHIPPEWA FLUTE SONG

To be chanted monotonously in a high pitch, with a downward inflection at the end of every sentence and at other places where the voice naturally falls

Hah---eeeeeeeeee---oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo!

My little Pigeon-woman,

For you alone, as I float in my little birch canoe in the
purple twilight,

I am singing, I am calling
on my little cedar lute tenderly.

For you alone, for you alone I am playing
on my little yellow flute mellowly.

And though the singing of my throat is like the grumping of
the frog

at night among the water-lilies,
yet the notes from my cedar Pee'-bo-an'
are like silver bubbles in the moonlight.

Therefore why do you hide away from me like the timid
little fawn

that peers tremblingly at me
from yonder bending willows,

My little Pigeon-woman,

My Kah-lee'-lee-oh'-kah-lay'-quay!

Hah---eeeeeeeeee---oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo!

From the clouds of purple twilight on yonder shore
the wailing loon is calling, calling,
calling for his woman drearily.

And I am also calling
 on my little yellow flute wearily.
In the dewy glade of yonder valley
 the whip-poor-will is crying for his mate;
In the sombre lonely shadows of the timber
 the melancholy owl is also calling.
But the owl and the whip-poor-will do not hear an answer
 to their many, many callings—
Nor do I hear an answer to my melody.
The meadow-lark is fluting his golden song;
 and from the lilled meadows
 other golden notes come floating back to him
 like little golden bells.
And though the meadow-lark does not sing more tenderly
 than my little yellow flute,
 you do not answer my callings,
My little Pigeon-woman,
My Kah-lee'-lee-oh'-kah-lay'-quay!

Hah---eeeeeeeeee---oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo!
And now the purple wings of the night are softly folded
 down
 upon my sleepy little lake,
 and the sighing silver balsams.
The cooing wood-dove has slipped her head beneath her
 downy wings;
 and the hermit-thrush will pipe no longer.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The eyes of the many little stars are peering down
 upon me from the sky steadily;
And the wan and sickly moon is smiling yellowly at me.
I do not like the many little peering eyes,
 I do not like the smiling yellow moon;
 I love the sun that dances down the sky
 with a swirl of scarlet robes,
 and with her head flung back over her shoulder,
 a taunting smile on her vermilion face.

And now the flutings of my little Pee'bo-a'n avail me no
 longer;
For you have flown away from me, you have flown away
 from me,
 like the sun that slipped down behind the willows
 trailing her purple veils behind her
 on the shimmering waters of my lake
 and over the edge of the world.

But tomorrow the sun will come back to me,
 the sun will come back tomorrow,
My little Pigeon-woman,
My Kah-lee'-lee-oh'-kah-lay'-quay!

Lew R. Sarett

PRAYERS AND FANTASIES

I

To have passed so close to annihilation, and (which is worse)
to have become stained so inalterably with the ideas
and habits of masses—this leaves me immeasurably dis-
couraged, out of love with myself.

Now I am good only to mimic inferior masters. My thoughts
are stifling—heavy grey dust from a scorched road.

For me silence; or if speech, then some humble poem in
prose. Indeed I am too conscientious—or shall we say
too impotent?—to dare the cool rhythm of prose, the
sharp edges of poetry.

Nymphes de Parnasse! Encore un Pégasse raté!

II

Touch once again with the lips of thought the fair rigid
limbs of goddesses men imagined beside the inland sea.
Give the life of our blood to one among them, and wor-
ship in her oval of tremulous gold the beauty of that
body whose embrace would murder us with ecstasy.

Recall from Orcus the Foam-born, lady of many names;
make for her a brodered throne among the dusky
colonnades of the soul.

Death, a fierce exaltation, sweeps from the lips of the con-
queror; but from hers, gently, a frail kiss, breathes a
savor of life.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

III

Slowly, too slowly, the night, with its noise and its fear and its murder, yields to the dawn. One by one the guns cease. Quicker, O dawn, quicker—dazzle the hateful stars, lighten for us the weight of the shadows.

The last rat scuttles away; the first lark thrills with a beating of wings and song. The light is soft; deliberately, consciously, the young dawn moves. My unclean flesh is penetrated with her sweetness and she does not disdain even me.

Out of the East as from a temple comes a procession of girls and young men, smiling, brave, candid, ignorant of grief.

Few know the full bitterness of night, but they alone will know the full beauty of dawn—if dawn ever comes.

IV

Life has deceived us. The thoughts we found so vivid and fresh were dull and crass as the prayers muttered to a worn rosary by an infidel priest.

The joy we felt in beauty, our sense of discovery at the touch of some age-green bronze; even the sick horror at some battlefield where the flesh had not quite fallen from the shattered bones—all this was old, a thousand times felt and forgotten.

And is the kiss of your mouth then but the reflection of dead kisses, the gleam of your breast a common thing? Was the touch of your hand but a worn memory of hands crumbled into cool dust?

V

And in the end one comes to love flowers as women, and women as flowers. Beauty recoils from excess. Imitate the wise Easterns, and let a few sprays of blossom decorate the empty chamber of the soul and spread their fragrance through its recesses.

Ah! To retain this fragrance, to make permanent this most precious of essences, this mingling of suave and acrid perfumes—something wild and tender and perverse and immortal!

I will make for myself, from tempered silver, an Aphrodite with narrow hips and small pointed breasts, and wide brow above gay, subtle eyes; and in her hand shall be a perfume ball sweet with this divine fragrance.

VI

Escape, let the soul escape from this insanity, this insult to God, from this ruined landscape, these murdered fields, this bitterness, this agony, from this harsh death and disastrous mutilation, from this filth and labor, this

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

stench of dead bodies and unwashed living bodies—
escape, let the soul escape!

Let the soul escape and move with emotion along ilex walks
under a quiet sky. There, lingering for a while beside
the marble head of some shattered Hermes, it strews
the violets of regret for a lost loveliness as transient as
itself. Or perhaps, by some Homeric sea, watching the
crisp foam blown by a straight wind, it gathers sea-
flowers, exquisite in their acrid restraint of color and
austere sparseness of petal.

There, perhaps, among flowers, at twilight, under the glim-
mer of the first stars, it will find a sensation of a quiet,
almost kindly universe, indifferent to this festering
activity.

VII

The gods have ceased to be truth, they have become poetry.
Now only simple pure hearts and those who are weary
of doubt believe. Why not pray to the gods, any god?
Perhaps even from the immensity of space will come
a gently ironic echo.

“Dionysios, lord of life and laughter, from whom come twin
gifts of ecstasy, hear me.

I pray the noble Iacchos of reverent mien and wide tolerant
eyes, to look mildly upon me and to show me the mystery
of beauty, the mystery of vineyards, the mystery of
death.

Richard Aldington

And I pray the young Dionysios, the bearer of the fawn-skin, the charioteer of leopards, the lover of white breasts, to show me the mystery of love.

And grant that nothing ignoble may render me base to myself; let desire be always fresh and keen; let me never love or be loved through ennui, through pity or through lassitude."

VIII

The moon high-seated above the ridge, fills the ruined village with tranquil light and black broken shadows—ruined walls, shattered timbers, piles of rubbish, torn-up ground, almost beautiful in this radiance, in this quiet June air. Lush grass in the tangled gardens sways very softly, and white moths dart over the bending sprays.

Somehow to-night the air blows clearer, sweeter—the chemistry of earth is slowly purifying the corrupting bodies, the waste and garbage of armies. Sweetness, darkness, clean peace—the marble rock of some Greek island, piercing its sparse garment of lavenders and mints like a naked nymph among rustling leaves.

Heavy-scented the air to-night—new-mown hay?—a pungent exotic odor—ah! phosfene. . . .

And to-morrow there will be huddled corpses with blue horrible faces and foam on their writhed mouths.

Richard Aldington

France, 1918

AFTERWARDS

Blow upon blow they bruise the daylight wan,
Scar upon scar they rend the quiet shore;
They ride on furious, leaving every man
Crushed like a maggot by the hoofs of war:
Gods that grow tired of paradisial water
And fill their cups with steaming wine of slaughter.

I fear a thing more terrible than death:
The glamour of the battle grips us yet—
As crowds before a fire that hold their breath
Watching the burning houses, and forget
All they will lose, but marvel to behold
Its dazzling strength, the glamour of its gold.

I fear the time when slow the flame expires,
When this kaleidoscope of roaring color
Fades, and rage faints; and of the funeral-fires
That shone with battle, nothing left of valor
Save chill ignoble ashes for despair
To strew with widowed hands upon her hair.

Livid and damp unfolds the winding-sheet,
Hiding the mangled body of the Earth:
The slow grey aftermath, the limping feet
Of days that shall not know the sound of mirth,

Iris Tree

But pass in dry-eyed patience, with no trust
Save to end living and be heaped with dust.

That stillness that must follow where Death trod,
The sullen street, the empty drinking-hall,
The tuneless voices cringing praise to God,
Deaf gods, that did not heed the anguished call,
Now to be soothed with humbleness and praise,
With fawning kisses for the hand that slays.

Across the world from out the fevered ground
Decay from every pore exhales its breath;
A cloak of penance winding close around
The bright desire of spring. And unto Death,
As to a conquering king, we yield the keys
Of Beauty's gates upon our bended knees.

The maiden loverless shall go her ways,
And child unfathered feed on crust and husk;
The sun that was the glory of our days
Shining as tinsel till the moody dusk
Into our starving outstretched arms shall lay
Her silent sleep, the only boon we pray.

Iris Tree

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

MY TEN BUCKEYES

Two I will plant at the edge of our camp
In the land where we go.
These, they are four, I will hold for the ridge
That our pennon shall know.
I think—yes, I think that these three
I will save, on the chance
That some of our boys may be called
Far away—out of France.

One is left; that is mine, all alone.
See, the number I bear
And the regiment, cut in the brown;
And this shall be there
In my pocket. Yes, more, it shall be
In my heart as I go.
My State! my own State, my home State,
Where the buckeyes grow!

Charles L. Sherwood

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE

Somewhere in France my heart is kept
In a soldier's heart, out there.
Last night I know not where it slept,
My heart, in his heart's care.

Isabel Howe Fiske

I know not if he slept at all,
My man across the sea.
I do not know if he will fall
Or come back safe to me.

He has my heart. That is my share,
My bit, that I have sent out there.

Isabel Howe Fiske

RAINY DAYS

Gray hills, gray clouds, gray faces at the pane,
Gray hearts that long for sunshine and blue skies,
The ceaseless rattle of the wind-born rain
Against bleak pavements! All the roadway lies
Sodden and glimmering with slow spreading streams
Storm-beaten into dullness and pale gray.
The hurrying footfall as it passes seems
Half deadened by the falling rain. Away
In the drab distance looms the murmuring town,
Cloaked in vague outline, misty and half seen;
Its own lights hanging over it like a crown,
Pale in the waning afternoon. How keen
The wind that moans away its chilling flight!
Gray days, gray hearts—gray hurrying down of night!

Shirley Harvey

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

REUBEN ROY

A little fellow, brown with wind—
I saw him in the street
Peering at numbers on the posts,
But most discreet:

For when a woman came outdoors,
Or slyly peeped instead,
He turned away, took off his hat,
And scratched his head.

I watched him from my garden-wall
Perhaps an hour or more,
For something in his attitude,
The clothes he wore,

Awoke the dimmest memories
Of when I was a boy
And knew the story of a man
Named Reuben Roy.

It seems that Reuben went to sea
The night his wife decried
The fence he built before their house
And up the side.

He wanted it but she did not,
Because it hid from view

Harold Crawford Stearns

The spot in which her mignonette
And tulips grew.

Nobody saw his face again,
But each year, unawares,
He sent a sum for taxes due—
And fence repairs.

My curiosity aroused,
I sauntered forth to see
Whether this individual
Were really he.

"Who are you looking for?" I asked.
His eyes, like two bright pence,
Sparkled at mine; and then he said:
"A fence."

"Somebody burned it Hallowe'en,
When people were in bed;
Before the judge could prosecute,
The culprit fled."

Well, Reuben only touched his hat
And mumbled, "Thank you, sir,"
And asked me whereabouts to find
A carpenter.

Harold Crawford Stearns

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THREE POEMS

LAUGHING IN THE MOONLIGHT

Three women laughing
In the moonlight,
In the night—
Eerie,
Strange,
With sound of water
Thundering up the cliff;
With sound that comes from swaying boughs
Of pine trees,
Giant pines of a virgin forest—
Fringe of wilderness,
The border
Of a narrow strip of clearing
On the bluffs.

Laughing! How their voices carry!
Fearlessly!
Such merriment
As must awake the sleepy soul of the forest.
Merriment so mad—
How it carries!
Elfish laughter—
Far out over the wicked waters,
Peals and peals!

Helen Louise Birch

And the moonlight wavers, glitters,
Strokes their white throats with its poison;
Makes its streaks and streams of silver
Cold and colder in its joy;
Sinks its sharp, silver-dappled, shining moon-fangs
In their eyes.

Laughing women,
Mad and merry,
Send their voices on the winds;
Calling destiny about them,
Calling to titanic powers:
Till their play,
And their lightness,
And their madness,
And their harsh and eerie laughter
Rouses forces that through aeons
Long have slept—
Slept and waited for a summons
Deep enough;
Wild enough,
Light enough,
And evil enough,
To call them forth.
Slow they stretch their unused muscles—
Answer in a dawning smile.

Three women are laughing in the moonlight,
In the night;

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

And earth is reeling
In light and shadow.
Air and water,
In some fearful manner,
Mingle
With their voices.
All of nature throngs and rushes
Into the vast,
Chaotic
Drift of sound—
A world of maddened, unchained souls,
Of wicked, savage glee!

Naked Earth
Swings into consciousness,
Uncovered,
Sudden,
Reeling in light and shadow,
Through this hellish, hellish laughter!—
Through this wild,
Malicious,
Evil,
Evil
Laughter!

VERTIGO

What did you play?
Or have such melodies no names?
And were they played on ivory keys,
Or did your fingers find a way,
So, touch by touch,
To where the nerves of all my being
Stretched their uneasy length?

Did I look deep into your eyes,
Or were mine closed,
When sudden vision of some new world
Caught me in floods of light?

I laid my hand upon your arm
And felt the cool black curtain of your sleeve.

Why, when you left me,
Was I plunged in sorrow—
Weary of all known things,
Grey, languid, and too dull for thought?

Slowly the moments passed,
While still I leaned
Against the door which closed you out,
And felt no pain.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

AND SO THE DAYS GO BY

And so the days go by,
All filled with majesty and stateliness.
The eastways slant of the morning beams,
So fresh,
Turns subtly into noon,
And with a secrecy beyond belief
The hours pass
And the long rays slant into the west.
They tint the heavy phlox-heads red like fire,
And make black shadow of the pale wild currant.
The hills beyond the lake drift far away,
Unreal and blue.

Unreal and pure and fey—
(Oh, the long hour and the rising mist!)—
Is the frail beauty of the twilight grey!

Helen Louise Birch

MASKS

Do birds sing for their mates?

My song was for one airy and shining,

Lighter than a butterfly's wings.

On the way, she would half-turn and listen.

*She fluttered solemn, occupied, yet I never knew her airy
business.*

Now that I sing of an earthly woman,

She listens wondering.

A HELEN

You looked tired,

For you came from far,

Perhaps from Greece.

You may have been walking for ages.

You stepped slowly,

As though you carried

Some precious wine.

You stayed a moment . . .

Then vanished,

Wondering,

As if you were some one else.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

GIRLS

I

Your family has moulded you.

Marks of their tools and fingers
Show about your torse and face.

Your cheeks near the mouth
Are half-frozen.

Your soul flutters
Faintly.

II

Your flesh slopes like rose-petals.
Like rose-petals
It holds and drinks in the light.

Your humid lips
Remember the mother's milk.

Yet there flutters about you a flame—
Maturing you, withering you.

III

In the cafeteria the girl moved briskly
In her imitation silk, sashed, hang-how-it-will dress;

Max Michelson

Yet knocked constantly against the customs—
In taking her water, her sugar, her catsup.

In the street too she walked briskly,
The old purse dangling and the old hat moving firmly;
Of a sudden she stopped, looked about, listened—
Struck by the city—shot—like a flying bird.

Then she took herself in hand and went on.

MYRRH

Your face called up a lily
Glowing in the dusk,
Your body the dusk-green stalk.
Your lips were parched, imploring . . .

As if they thirsted for the kiss behind the kiss,
As if they awaited disappointment.

PAIN

Her lips lie tired, discarded.
Her eyes are on the alert, as if for some mystic tryst.
Through the white limbs where desire has leaped and pranced
Now runs the invisible fire—
An offering to some mysterious god.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

A LADY TALKING TO A POET

For a moment you felt nude and shivered.

Your social position hung near;

You threw it about you—

A garment frail and lacy.

THE GOLDEN APPLE

Running to art-exhibitions, to concerts and to the poor in
the tenements,

With eyes held high up as a cloud, and as soft, as haunting,

She stopped to pick up

The golden, apple-shaped distiller.

A DILETTANTE

Tall, delicately-stout,

With "turned," wine-moist moustache,

He spoke like some bragging, spoiled school-boy:

"Art is its own reward."

THE TRAITOR

He knew the lady's half-mocking, half-regretful smile,

Fluttering like one of the sweet-pea petals,

Max Michelson

Had been fertilized by the sweat and blood of her husband's
vest-workers.

Yet his eyes resented the intrusion
Of firm matter-of-fact chins of servants.

A RICH GENTLEMAN

Your nostrils sniff the air,
Your ears stand alert:
Near you, like wolves in the forest,
Lurk other people's poverty and suffering;
And though your heart is robust—
Tough, like the cheek of a country girl,
You dare not trust it.

A PETIT BOURGEOIS

Sharp nails grow out from your fat fingers;
Over your clean-shaven lip glimmers the moustache of a
tom-cat.
Your smiles are investments at a hundred per-cent.
Yet one has only one life, one mouth, one stomach, and can
take only one woman at a time;
Also, when you were younger, before you knew,
You foolishly allowed suffering to reach your heart.
So your face sometimes contorts wistfully—
You use this sanctimoniously to deceive.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

LA MORT DE PAUL VERLAINE

The few rosy cloud-splotches
In the bluish-white afternoon sky
Shed down ruddy flowers of light—
Big, capriciously shaped lilies and orchids—so thickly
That some, held at the stems, stood as if growing straight
from the grass.

Among them he came—short, heavy, a little ragged,
With eyes and lips that had laughed much with wine;
Faintly-drunk, as if wine-vapors of the past were hovering
in his head;
Blowing his flute and dancing,
Now fast, now slow, and now stopping . . . listening . . .
An earth-flower among the light flowers.

Tired, he dropped down on the grass.
The light-flowers caressed his cheeks and his drowsy eyes with
their cloud-like coolness—piling about him.
Did the trees understand?

The birds sang
As though it were a sunrise.

Max Michelson

DEATH

One comes to me every day—
Gentle, tactful, and of
Admirable dignity.

He is friendly though not wheedling,
He wants me to know him.
Sometimes he touches my arm,
Or even presses it impulsively.

TO A WOMAN ASLEEP IN A STREET-CAR

Woman sleeping in the car—
Strange, aloof and far—
Shall I shake you and tell you
 Who you are?

Wake up and let us speak—
Till our hearts are bared to the core,
Till we are a man and a woman no more,
Till we are empty like vases that leak,
 Till we droop and fall,
 Till we are nothing at all.

Max Michelson

COMMENT

A CENTURY IN ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS has been celebrating, with speeches, a poetic pageant, and the dedication of monuments, the centennial of her admission to the Union. Every imaginative mind must have accepted this challenge to review the dramatic history of those hundred years and thrill over the prodigious epic they unfold. The beautiful wilderness of flower-tossing prairies changing into one of the world's great granaries, coal-fields, manufactories; criss-crossing with railroads and word-bearing, light-carrying wires; building up villages, towns, and one of the most populous and powerful cities on earth; founding institutions and governments, quarrelling, legislating, fighting fierce wars; nursing and developing great men, including the soldier who led the Union troops to victory and the president whom time is crowning as one of the mightiest spirits of the ages: is it not an incomparable story, a fantastic dream come true, a poem beyond the reach of genius, however plumed and starred?

A tradition like this is an immeasurably precious heritage for the people of Illinois and the whole Middle-West, and disregard of it would be a menace to our civilization. By a fault of our American character we are too neglectful of such traditions, and it is the province of art to produce imperishable reminders which shall avail to keep great days, great deeds, great men, in memory. It is not strange, no cause for despair, if we have not yet produced art which

measures up to our history—epoch-making deeds must have their day before art can build above them the stuff of dreams. It may be a platitude to repeat that our pioneer ancestors were living, instead of writing, their epics, tragedies, lyrics of joy and pain; but the platitude hides a profound truth—the mighty imaginative stimulus of the wilderness, the stupendous continental dreams which led those men and women on.

With many globe-trotting Americans the historic sense is over-sentimentalized: they weep for fallen Cæsars in the Forum, they make Stratford-on-Avon a place of pilgrimage, and on the shores of our virginal Great Lakes they long for the glamour of a peopled and sorrow-haunted past. Foolish!—are they unworthy of their fathers, whose hearts felt the glamour of the present and whose far-seeing eyes visioned the future? Shall we not emulate the pioneers, who were inspired by the inviolate freedom of the vast wilderness confronting them? A spirit like theirs, if we possess it and act upon it as they did, will construct the future of the world.

But Illinois, even now, need not be ashamed of her art-history. She would not need to be ashamed of it if her list were limited to one name, that of Abraham Lincoln, the greatest literary artist the nation has produced, whose speeches are prose-poems of incomparable beauty. And Chicago—why do we hear puny apologists for Chicago, who has no need of such mistaken service? Is not Chicago, by admission of that dyed-in-the-wool New Yorker, Henry L.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Mencken, "the most civilized city in America," possessed of "the mysterious something, a spirit that broods upon the face of the waters"? Is there not a feeling of youth in her, a feeling big and free and many-colored and conquering, like the oceanic lake at her right hand—a feeling from the inmost heart of the nation, as Lake Michigan is the focal centre of a continent?

Chicago, Illinois, the Middle-West—this vital and vitalizing section—needs only, in art, the spirit it has shown in other things—the spirit of active and immediate response to the need of the hour. It is in this spirit that Chicago invented the sky-scraper, in this spirit that she brought forth *The Spoon River Anthology* and *Chicago Poems*, in this spirit—let me hope—that POETRY was founded and that many greater things will be achieved in the future of our dreams.

The most dangerous enemy of this spirit is self-distrust—a certain colonialism which leans upon London, Paris, New York, thus bidding our artists imitate instead of create, or exiling them instead of keeping them at home. Every artistic venture confronts the benumbing influence of this enemy, meets the facile temptation to become itself colonial. When POETRY began, for example, two courses were open: it could have become, what *The Little Review* is now, the organ of a choice little London group of superintellectualized dultimates and expatriates; or, as I hope it has become, the organ of a higher and more conscious, concentrated and independent imaginative life in this country. The first course would

have been comparatively easy—I remember with what cordial kindness a poet in exile once offered to conduct from London our entire prose section!—and, since the editorials would no doubt have been very clever, and very scornful of most things American, we should unquestionably have been praised by some of the choicest spirits on both sides of the water, and should have acquired by this time a much longer list of subscribers.

The other course, however, seemed more important, though much more difficult and less immediately rewarding. Our enormous (potential) constituency may not yet be sympathetically aware of our effort to make its poetic impulse independently self-assured and articulate, but it can not deny that POETRY has achieved, is achieving, something of this purpose. It has set in motion far-travelling currents of influence; it has gathered together and brought into sympathetic contact a group of poets now widely recognized—a group which, let us hope, Chicago will cherish instead of shooing away. The word coterie is perhaps over-despised. Coteries having been necessary and effective in Athens, Rome, Florence, Paris and London, they are of course equally necessary, and may prove equally effective, in Chicago. A coterie is but a group of people working together, and teamwork is required in the arts, as in everything else, if anything save benumbing isolation is to be accomplished. If POETRY can help to develop and make articulate the imaginative life of the nation—as when, for example, it wrings out of a poet's over-modest reluctance the beautiful Chip-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

pewa monologues in the present number—then its editors will be more proud than of having introduced the imagists, important as that episode was in our earliest history and the literary history of our period.

So let us raise the flag of Illinois, be a part of its centennial, and help to make its future more glorious, ever more vital and inspiring in the life of the nation and the world.

H. M.

AN INTERNATIONAL EPISODE

Some of our readers have asked me what number of *The English Review* would contain my reply to Edgar Jepson's article of last May. Let me answer the question with the following correspondence:

Mr. Austin Harrison, Editor of The English Review, to Miss Monroe, returning the latter's manuscript, "Mr. Jepson and United States Poetry":

Dear Miss Monroe:

I really think it is hardly necessary to enter into a controversy over Jepson's article. We are very full at this moment and I could not in any case find room now.

Miss Harriet Monroe to Mr. Austin Harrison:

My dear Mr. Harrison:

Your letter of July 9th, returning my comments on Mr. Jepson, reminds me of the Kaiser's reply to Belgium. You invade our province, quite uninvited and undesired, and kill off its most prominent citizens. Then, when I protest, you inform me that "it is hardly necessary to enter into a controversy."

It would have been more in accordance with the British tradition of fair play if this consideration had caused you to decline Mr. Jepson's egregiously caddish article.

And so ends an international episode.

Or perhaps not quite ends. For *The Little Review*, now under the dictatorship of Ezra Pound, reprints a condensa-

tion of Mr. Jepson's article in its latest number, Mr. Pound stating in his footnote that the article was "ordered" by POETRY "and then rejected for its lack of flattery." Let us take the trouble to set Mr. Pound right: our letter to Mr. Jepson saying that we might wish to use his proposed "appreciation" of American poetry was not an "order," and our rejection of it was not due to its "lack of flattery," but to its cheap incompetence. By the reprint Mr. Pound freshens up, so to speak, the article's attack on POETRY, a magazine which, during the past six years, he has so amiably represented in London. Evidently this poet obeys the scriptural injunction not to let his right hand know what his left hand is doing.

Perhaps Mr. Harrison was not without excuse in declining my article, for Mr. Jepson's was certainly not worth a controversy—the only wonder is that any editor, however insular, could consider it worth his space. Opinionating, however denunciatory, is not criticism. To call Mr. Frost's *Snow* "a maundering burble," or to dispose of *The Chinese Nightingale* as "harmless enough verse . . . inspired by *The Ingoldsby Legends*" (which Mr. Lindsay had never heard of), or to dismiss with scorn Cloyd Head's closely woven *Grotesques* after reading "at random" four lines, proves nothing except that Mr. Jepson should apply to himself his condemnation of Edgar Lee Masters by admitting that he has "no poetic quality of any kind"—or critical either.

H. M.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

POETRY AN ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY

The truth has been officially spoken at last—that poetry is an essential industry. The story, as it comes to us—by hearsay evidence which we can not vouch for—runs thus: Mr. Conrad Aiken, being included in the recent military registration somewhere in Boston or near it, showed his undeniable fighting spirit by fighting for his art—he demanded fourth-class registration not on the usual easy terms (for he might have claimed exemption because of having a family to support) but on the ground that he was a poet and that poetry is an essential industry. The claim, being novel, was referred to Washington, and by some ultimate Solomon, there sitting in judgment, was sustained, being affirmed and decreed and locked and bolted under all the sacred seals of law.

Thus the art owes to Mr. Aiken a new and important service, much more hazardous than his various books—though any book of verse is indeed a heroic hazard!—or his high-spirited, bristlingly militant, critical articles. The art owes to him what it has never before, so far as we can remember, received in this country—official recognition, a definite legal status. POETRY, as the organ of the art which Mr. Aiken for the last six or eight years has proudly served and loyally fought for, extends to him its cordial thanks and congratulations. May he live long to write and fight under the banner of the muse!

Let the paragraphers make merry if they will—that wise man in Washington was wiser than they. H. M.

REVIEWS

MISS LOWELL AND POLYPHONIC PROSE

Can Grande's Castle, by Amy Lowell. Macmillan Co.

Amy Lowell—a Critical Appreciation, by W. Bryher. Eyre & Spottiswoode, Ltd., London.

In *Can Grande's Castle* Miss Lowell gives us a volume of polyphonic prose—four poems in this manner, preceded by an explanatory preface. The four pieces are chosen with excellent discrimination; they present admirably the poet's claims for this form, and enable us to study its value as a poetic medium. Miss Lowell, who has, if not invented, at least adapted the form to her purposes, and made it peculiarly her own, says in her preface:

"Polyphonic prose" is perhaps a misleading title, as it tends to make the layman think that this is a prose form. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The word "prose" in its title simply refers to the manner in which the words are printed; "polyphonic"—many-voiced—giving the real key. "Polyphonic prose" is the purest, the most elastic, of all forms, for it follows at will any, and all, of the rules which guide other forms. Metrical verse has one set of laws, cadenced verse another; polyphonic prose can go from one to the other in the same poem with no sense of incongruity. The only touchstone is the taste and feeling of its author.

Miss Lowell tells of getting the hint of the form from Paul Fort; but of finding both the French alexandrine and the traditional English iambic pentameter unsuitable as a "basic rhythm."

I finally decided to base my form upon the long flowing cadence of oratorical prose. The variations permitted to this cadence enable the poet to change the more readily into those of *vers libre*,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

or even to take the regular beat of metre, should such a marked time seem advisable.

We may pass over, as of no importance, the much-mooted question whether this form is poetry or prose. It has never been possible, and it never will be, to draw an absolute line between poetry and prose, however sharply grammarians, rhetoricians and other rule-makers have tried to do so. These pieces, unquestionably, are pure artistry; as close in their structure as any of the long eighteenth-century narratives and descriptive pieces in the heroic couplet, or the nineteenth-century ditto in blank verse, even if Miss Lowell's rhythms be more elastic than those earlier rhythms to which our ears have been long attuned. We may therefore consider the form, and these four presentations of it, on their merits and by their results, just as, long ago, we might have considered Thomson's *Seasons*, Cowper's *The Sofa*, Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, or any other of those long poems of narrative and description, fairly numerous in English literature, which, whatever their metrical structure, move inevitably back and forth between poetry and prose. Miss Lowell's form has a certain advantage in being more frank, in slipping more easily from one to the other according to the exigencies of the story and the poet's mood.

The poems are, I repeat, sheer artistry; they represent the accomplished virtuosity of a scholarly and imaginative mind, of an expert rhythmist, of a richly endowed human being who is keenly, even lovingly, observant of life. The trouble is, the observation—the imaginative grasp of the various incidents—seems a bit intellectual and aloof, the artistry too

Miss Lowell and Polyphonic Prose

deliberate and self-conscious, the manner too explanatory, and thus the whole effect too literary. The poems become over-picturesque, and their vivid presentations of people and places, contrasts and paradoxes, too studied, too brilliant. The winds blow too sharply—one can scarcely breathe. There is a perpetual flicker of little rhymes and flutter of rhythmic bells. There is unresting and never-ending movement of both detail and mass—swift rushings from paddle-wheels to smoke-plumes, from America to Japan. The eye can scarcely see, or the ear hear, for the glitter, for the blare. If Cowper and Thomson were too placid, Miss Lowell is too eager, too violent.

It may be that she is thus true to her time—this age of telephone-calls and trolley-cars and machine-guns—just as Cowper and Thomson were true to their leisurely eighteenth century. But art has many ways of defeating itself and only one way of swinging clear of threats and dangers. The transcendent art which is seized and carried by the emotion—an impassioned renunciation which triumphs in loss—that I can not find in this book. The poet may be true to her consumingly restless period, but she does not get a perspective on that period, does not establish its relation with that spacious stillness which we call eternity.

Thus the brochure by W. Bryher, recently published in London, seems to me to rate Miss Lowell too highly in calling her "a poet of the first order;" though praise from London for any American artist is rare enough for over-generosity to be pardoned. The art which forgets and

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

transcends art is beyond her reach; or at least it may have been touched by her, in my opinion, only in a few of her briefer poems—such a lyric, for example, as *Venus Transiens*, or such a pure grotesque as *Red Slippers*. Short of this, I am with the English critic in many details of his—or it may be her—appreciation. In these days of sloppy and slipshod writing Miss Lowell's scholarship and careful workmanship are a relief. Also certain figures, lines and passages have extreme vividness and beauty.

The orchards are filled
With cherry-blossoms at butterfly poise—

and

The fountain bent and straightened itself
In the night wind,
Blowing like a flower.

These and other metaphors equally happy are quoted in the brochure, and to them we might add many from the new volume, such as—in *Guns as Keys*, which presents Perry's expedition to Japan:

Madeira, Cape Town, Mauritius, Singapore—nice firm stepping-places for seven-league boots;

or

with ripe fruit-bearing guns pointed inland.

Here is an effective passage—the great Nelson really falls in it:

Red blood in a flood before his eyes. Red from horizon to zenith, crushing down like beaten metal. The Admiral falls to his knees, to his side, and lies there, and the crimson glare closes over him.

If only the poet knew when to stop! In my opinion the next phrase, "a cupped inexorable end," carries the figure too

Miss Lowell and Polyphonic Prose

far and nullifies the tragic beauty of the picture. Also the paragraph which then follows is simply an ineffective intrusion:

The blue thread is snapped and the bolt falls from the loom. Weave, shuttle of the red thread. Weave over and under yourself in a scarlet ecstasy. It is all red now he comes to die. Red, with the white sparkles of those cursed stars.

The above quotations are typical, perhaps, of both Miss Lowell's vision and lack of vision, her attainment and her limitations. One wonders how a close observer can make such incomplete and unconvincing use of American slang as she does on page fifty-four; and how an accomplished stylist can so frequently carry the exclamatory note to the breaking point. Somehow, when her art has free rein it goes too far. This, for example, from *The Bronze Horses*, the latest and longest of these four poems:

Such a pounding, pummelling, pitching, pointing, piercing, pushing, pelting, poking, panting, punching, parrying, pulling, prodding, pulsing, piling, passing, you never did see.

How was it possible to write down all those alliterative participles without realizing that there were too many of them? How is it possible for a poet so gifted not to recognize over-strain? I question such a passage with full recognition of this poet's rare gift for effective and artistic use of the grotesque, a quality which has been much misunderstood.

To conclude: I think Miss Lowell makes her point as to the adaptability and flexibility of her medium, even though I would question certain details, like its over-elaborate use of rhyme. It responds to varying moods; it accepts grace-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

fully—in *Guns as Keys*, for example—the interludes in free verse, and would yield as easily, perhaps, to more conventional measures. And I can agree with much of W. Bryher's appreciation, though to call this poet the "most individual of writers," and her poems "crushed experiences spilling in drops of light" may be extreme. But there is much truth in these sentences from the conclusion:

The curves of her cadences are sharp with truth, with sensitiveness to the irony of existence, which yet believes in adventure and in resistance. Dreams, and a core of ever-recurring loneliness, are perhaps the soul of their intense life. . . . The offering of her own vision to unobservant eyes, the breaking of innumerable barriers; for, among all poets, Miss Lowell is essentially an explorer.

H. M.

A POTENTIAL ARTIST

Nocturne of Remembered Spring and Other Poems, by Conrad Aiken. Four Seas Co.

This poet always gives me the feeling that some day he may win through and do something important—some day when he has finished his more or less unconscious experimenting in the manner of Masfield or Gibson or some earlier poet, and his more or less inevitably bookish emotionalizing in fields remote from actual emotional experience. He has been tempted by a dangerous facility—a really expert facility which enables him to turn out verses satin-smooth or burlap-harsh at will, and to play with rhythmic tones and colors like a virtuoso; and one resents the fact that as yet this expertness has proved, in the higher sense, ineffectual, producing only such blatant melodrama as *Earth Triumphant*, or, as in

The Jig of Forslin, an up-to-date sentimentalism which parallels the mid-Victorian sentimentalism of Owen Meredith's *Lucille*.

One resents it because the man himself is not cheap, because one discerns sincerity under art which he has not yet succeeded in making really sincere, because one feels in this poet—if I may use an over-worked phrase—a suffering soul, a soul which, since it is fitted out with so much talent, with a technique as it were ready-made, should attain to art profoundly true and beautiful. One is perpetually hoping for such attainment, and for my part I shall not give up hoping as I open each new book from his hand.

This hope is not satisfied by *Nocturne of Remembered Spring* any more¹ than by the earlier volumes. No one knows this better than its author, whose anonymous review of his own volume in the *Chicago News* should be the despair of any other reviewer, so keenly discerning was it, so cruelly just in its discriminating severity. The man not only knows himself, but agonizes in the knowledge—the man who can say of his own art such things as these :

Mr. Aiken comes to the rehearsal, so to speak, still fumbling in his pockets for his part. Sometimes the radicals please him and he plays with the radicals; sometimes he plays with the shell-backs. And even when apparently most single-minded he carries on clandestine flirtations. This is a serious weakness. It points to a fundamental lack of conviction, in Mr. Aiken's mind, as to poetic values.

In *Turns and Movies* he wilfully sacrificed his ability to write in smoothly involved curves, for a dubious gain in matter-of-fact forcefulness. In *The Jig of Forslin* he recanted, and with occasional sops to downright and rigid realism, abandoned himself to a luxuriation

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

in romantic virtuosity. And now, in *Nocturne of Remembered Spring*, he is more clearly than ever a schisophrenetic.

Et cetera, with references to "the musical symbolism, almost obsessively pursued," "emotional symbols so idiosyncratic as to be almost meaningless," "vacillations between flesh and sentiment," the "dominant erotic theme." Indeed almost the only merit the poet admits in his book is "the occasional flush of verbal magic."

Well, it has other merits, but on the whole its author's wittily serious arraignment is bitterly true. The book shows that loss of power inevitable when an artist skirts the edges of his soul and avoids the depths. It is either the last of its kind—the poet's farewell to the stage-play and facile stunt-doing of his youth, or else it represents a hardening of the crust of his mind, a hopeless covering-up of the real man and the potential fine artist under a poetic loquacity unconquerably artificial and insincere. Mr. Aiken must decide whether he will or will not force his art to be true to him. Even now this may be beyond his power—he may have borne too long with the lady's light-minded escapades and frivolities. Yet she is worth the effort—fasting and prayer and flagellation may be an effective spiritual discipline for the pair of them.

H. M.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

ONE ON US

All POETRY poets (and editors as well) will please take notice! The following letter appeared September 20th in the columns of our watchful St. Louis contemporary:

THE CLICHÉ

Editor of Reedy's Mirror:

I write to you in considerable bewilderment, having heretofore been assured that POETRY, of Chicago, was the foe of the threadbare phrase, the archaic adjective. Yet in a single copy (the August issue) I find these specimens of virginal imagination: *Red dawn, last charge, wee head, weary bran, love-light, fragrant hay, young green, vagrant wind, rustling grass, dank odor, tossing spray, fading light, fleeting feet, red blood, lonely nights, deathless ire, meadows wide, slow refrain, fair daughter and gallant courage!*

Add to those the "fresh young" Broadway turns:

Largess, paven, crass, perchance, frore, and rathe, and you may possibly sympathize with such befuddlement as exists on my side of the Sierras.

George Sterling

PRAISE FROM SIR HUBERT

Wonder of wonders—we are discovered by that exclusive English aristocrat, the London *Saturday Review*! The following excerpts are from an editorial on *Some Essentials in Modern American Poetry*, by W. Bryher, in the issue of August 31st:

Inspiration here is a dull and lifeless thing. America is producing book after book of fresh and exultant vision, young as any Elizabethan, just as definitely original. The restless future is a willing captive in its hands. While we, in England, praise our immaturities, blind to outside loveliness, experiment with them is at point to pass into achievement. Vividness, vitality and concentration, beauty and originality of expression—if these are the essentials of modern poetry, and I believe they are, look for them in the

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

work of Amy Lowell, H. D., John Gould Fletcher, Sandburg, Frost, and many another writer. . . . Truly the time is ripe for a re-discovery of America.

What are the tendencies which have startled American poetry into so sudden and virile a realization of loveliness, so true and individual an expression of life? Partly it is the power, the new gift of these younger writers, to love their future with a strength drawn from their past. Partly it is due to the varied roots from which these new impulses are derived. Miss Lowell owes much to her French reading; H. D. is unmistakably Greek in form and thought; the literature of many countries unites in Fletcher; with Sandburg Swedish ancestry mingles with American experience. . . .

An so on for three columns, with brief analyses of the five poets above-mentioned, ending with Miss Lowell, as "the most original poet of the new movement."

Carl Sandburg has been acclaimed also by Clement Shorter in the *London Sphere*. *Chicago Poems* he pronounces "one of the most original books the age has produced," and its author "a second Walt Whitman." We find no mention, however, of the fact that for once a poet was first discovered, and even be-prized, in his own home town.

CORRESPONDENCE

A WORD FROM MR. SARETT

In sending us *The Blue Duck*, its author wrote as follows from the University of Illinois:

I have come to appreciate recently, first, the vast, rich amount of poetic material that lay in my nine years of experience among the Chippewas, and in my intimate knowledge of their customs, language, music and peculiar mental and emotional slants; and secondly, I realized the peculiar fitness of the new poetic form as a vehicle for Indian poetry. Hence I started *The Blue Duck*.

There are a few bits that might be made more poetic and delicate, but I hold that they ought not to be if the poem is to be true

A Word from Mr. Sarett

to type, if it is to be an interpretation of the genuine Indian. I have made every figure, image and word honest and realistic, within the range of experience, imagination and language peculiar to "honest-to-goodness" Indians, elevated a bit here and there, however, to avoid the commonplace. The poem tries to hit the happy medium between the finer idealism of Indian thinking and emotion, and the other extreme of realism with its crudeness, commonplaceness, and roughness. In its basic fidelity to Chippewa concepts and images, to Chippewa language and diction, to Chippewa moods and emotional reactions, to Chippewa singing and the monotonous dancing rhythms—in these respects the poem is as perfect as I can make it.

The poem is an interpretation of a Chippewa Medicine Dance and Song. In early autumn a duck, crudely carved from wood, is placed upon a pole on the shore of the lake adjoining the Indian village. A medicine-man starts the ceremony by beating monotonously on the *Mi-de-gwa-kik'*, a small drum. The chief singer and dancer begins to stamp and to posture, and to shout and to grunt, finally breaking into a song, and at times a chant, invoking *Keetch'-ie Man-i-do'*, the Big Spirit, to send down many ducks for the fall hunt, "to make a good duck season."

In order to catch the rhythm, tap two beats for each measure, and stress the first beat. Maintain the "drum beats" monotonously through the poem, except when the dancing ceases for a time, and the chant begins.

Lew R. Sarett

A TRIBUTE TO MR. MICHELSON

The following *Comment on the Poems of M. M.* comes from a poet who read them in manuscript:

Could I understand
Every accent of your tongue
Which haunts me,
I should be transfigured—
No crowd could touch my garment,
No dust soil it.
But alas!—
The woman with ears of echoing sea-shell
Lies yet unrisen
On the sea-sand of my heart.

Frances Shaw

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDS

Each November of POETRY's history has brought to the members of its staff the agreeable duty of awarding two or more prizes. When the magazine began, prizes in this art were practically unheard-of in America, although annual prizes and scholarships in painting, sculpture, architecture and music have been common. The editors believed, and still believe, in these awards, both as a stimulus to the artists and a kind of advertisement of the art before the public. We believe that they are as well deserved, and as effective for these purposes, in poetry as in the other arts, and we rejoice that the example of the magazine is being followed by the Poetry Society of America, through Columbia University, and that other institutions and individuals are at least considering the bestowal of such awards.

Compared with other artists the poet, as everyone knows, is absurdly ill-paid. POETRY is, we believe, almost the only one of the special magazines which has been able to pay anything to its contributors, yet we should hate to expose the ridiculous smallness of our checks for such far-famed poems of the past six years as Rupert Brooke's war sonnets and Joyce Kilmer's *Trees*; or—among poets now living—for six of Tagore's *Gitanjali*, or for *Ego Dominus Tuus* by Mr. Yeats, *General Booth* by Mr. Lindsay, *Silence* by Mr. Masters, *Songs out of Stress* by Sara Teasdale, and many others: ridiculous, compared with the five, eight, even ten thousand dollars paid to our contemporary painters and sculptors of equal

Announcement of Awards

rank for a single work of no greater beauty and inherent value. Nor will the few prizes offered in this art bear comparison with the numerous and extremely large awards to painters and sculptors in our various large cities—for example, thirty-four hundred dollars in five prizes, accompanied by gold, silver and bronze medals, at a single annual exhibition of the Chicago Art Institute!

POETRY would like to change all this—it would like to be rich enough to pay for poems at least a living wage, so that poets would not have to face the grim alternative of starving or getting an engrossing and art-destroying job. The editors constantly run up against cases of poignant suffering caused by this condition—suffering which, far from enriching the poet's art, tends to stifle it altogether. They could dispose of thousands a year to individuals who desperately need the money, and whose talent gives them fully as much right to it as the numerous American art students have who enjoy local or travelling scholarships, or even large allowances, with studio and residence, from the American Academy at Rome.

At this point, to enforce my argument, the postman hands me a letter from Sara Teasdale, who recently received the Poetry Society's five-hundred-dollar prize. She tells of the soul-destroying struggles of one or two young poet friends, and adds:

I wish that you would write an editorial about Crowder's dictum that poets are essential to the nation's well-being. So far so good. But *how* is a poet to live on his work? Did Gen. Crowder or any of these other patriotic people and organizations who continually write to poets for verses (to be furnished free for patriotic causes) ever consider that point? If a poet makes \$500 a year on his poems,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

he is doing well. Most of the "laity" have no idea how small the sums paid to poets are. If they knew, I think there might be some patriotic and generous millionaires who would come forward with more prizes, endowments and what not.

One chief trouble is that the short-story writers and their publishers make a point of advertising the huge sums paid to successful short-story writers. Therefore the unsuspecting laity think that poets fare equally well. An eager lady asked a friend of mine quite confidentially the other day, "Sara Teasdale gets about a thousand dollars for each of her poems, doesn't she?"

And the *New York Sun*, discussing Joyce Kilmer's career, says:

We ask that our poets, above all people, should be wise. But we are told that Wisdom comes with leisure, and books and children about her knee. The young poet of to-day has scant enough of the first; the second he has no chance to enjoy, and the children are apt to represent so many mouths to be fed. . . .

A poetry born of conditions prevalent to-day is apt to be thin: how otherwise, when there is so little time for ripe thought and thick packing? It is apt to lack sustaining power; how else, when the creator comes to his task already fagged from the world's work? It is apt to lack careful workmanship: time is so scarce. And it will fail often to afford that escape from our muddy prison that the poet should offer us: the world is too much with him.

Well, we must change all that, and, for a beginning, it would be impossible to over-state our feeling of gratitude to the two guarantors of POETRY who have given annual prizes during the past five years, as well as to others who have given occasional prizes. They are pioneers in a good cause, and it is our firm belief that their generosity will so leaven the public mind as to give rise to a long list of successors. POETRY, as we have often said, is a current exhibition; no more than in other current exhibitions can we hope to show numerous masterpieces, or to manifest impeccable justice in

Announcement of Awards

our awards. Human judgment is notoriously fallible, but such as it is, it must be our guide.

With this preliminary, the editorial staff of POETRY has the honor of announcing the three prizes awarded to poems printed in POETRY during its sixth year—October, 1917, to September, 1918, inclusive.

Poems by members of the jury—in this case *New Mexico Songs*, by Alice Corbin, and *Carolina Wood-cuts*, by Harriet Monroe—are withdrawn from competition. And Mr. Yeats having declined—November, 1913,—POETRY's earliest prize award on the magnanimous ground that prizes should go to younger poets, we must regard his beautiful poem, *Ego Dominus Tuus* (October, 1917) as *hors concours*. Also, the jury has not been able to consider as a possibility awarding the Levinson Prize to anyone who has previously received it, although *Prairie* by Carl Sandburg, *Canticle of the Race* by Edgar Lee Masters, and *The Empire of China Is Crumbling Down* by Vachel Lindsay, would otherwise have been considered, and are herewith most honorably mentioned. Translations are also exempt from competition for prizes, although this year has been fortunate in four translations of such special distinction that we have mentioned them below in a separate list.

THE HELEN HAIRE LEVINSON PRIZE of two hundred dollars for a poem or group of poems by a citizen of the United States, is awarded to

MR. JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

of New York and New Mexico, for his Serbian war poem, *The Song of the Cheechas*, printed in the June number.

This prize was founded in 1913 by Mr. Salmon O. Levinson of Chicago. Previous awards have been as follows:

1914—Carl Sandburg, for *Chicago Poems*.

1915—Vachel Lindsay, for *The Chinese Nightingale*.

1916—Edgar Lee Masters, for *All Life in a Life*.

1917—Cloyd Head, for *Grotesques*.

The prize of one hundred dollars, offered by an anonymous guarantor for a poem, or group of poems, without distinction of nationality, is awarded to

MR. AJAN SYRIAN

of New York, for his group of Syrian and Armenian war poems, *From the Near East*, in the August number.

(Our readers will note the odd coincidence by which both these prizes go to poems of the war.)

This prize, or other prizes similar in intent, have been previously awarded as follows:

1913—Vachel Lindsay, for *General Booth Enters into Heaven*.

1915—Constance Lindsay Skinner, for *Songs of the Coast-dwellers*.

1915—"H. D.," for *Poems*.

1916—John Gould Fletcher, for *Arizona Poems*.

1917—Robert Frost, for *Snow*.

In addition to these two annuals, another guarantor of the magazine offers this year a prize of fifty dollars for a poem,

Announcement of Awards

or group of poems, by a young beginner in the art. This prize is awarded to a twenty-year-old poet of unusual promise,

MR. EMANUEL CARNEVALI

of New York, for his group, *The Splendid Commonplace*, printed in the March number.

Three other special prizes, of one hundred dollars each, have been previously awarded: to Louise Driscoll, for *Metal Checks*, as the best poem of the war received in competition and printed in our War Number of November, 1914; to Wallace Stevens, for *Three Travellers Watch a Sunrise*, adjudged the best one-act poetic play received in a prize contest—July, 1916; and to Muna Lee, for numbers III, IV and VII of her group, *Footnotes* (January, 1916), the prize having been offered by Mrs. Julius Rosenwald for a lyric poem or poems by a young poet, printed in POETRY during its fourth year.

Besides the above three awards, the following poems receive honorable mention:

The Tired Woman, by Max Michelson (February).

Morning Hymn and *The Smoke Prayer*, by Frank S. Gordon (June).

Carlos Among the Candles, by Wallace Stevens (December).

Songs of the Dust, by Gladys Cromwell (March).

When the Willow Nods, by Alfred Kreymborg (March).

Moonrise, by D. H. Lawrence (July).

In the Frail Wood, by Marsden Hartley (July).

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Wolverine Winter, by Paul F. Sifton (January).

Le Médecin Malgré Lui, by William Carlos Williams (July).

She Weeps Over Rahoon, by James Joyce (November).

Poems, by Mark Turbyfill (August).

Who Is That a-Walking in the Corn? by Fenton Johnson (June).

There Was a Rose, by Arthur L. Phelps (July).

Freebourne's Rifle and *The Hurricane*, by Baker Brownell (March).

Iris and *The Jacaranda*, by Lucy Eddy (February).

Mine, by Lucia Peeples (January).

School-room Sketches, by Florence Ripley Mastin (January).

Snow Monotones, by Ben Hecht (February).

Driftwood Burning, by Zoë Akins (September).

The Herd Boy and *Star-dust*, by Haniel Long (May).

The following translations also receive honorable mention:
Chinese Poems, translated by Arthur Waley (January and February).

Peruvian Poems, by Jose Santos Chocano, translated by John Pierrepont Rice (February).

With the Wind, by Konstantin Balmont, translated by Edith Chapman Tracy (August).

Two Spanish Folk-songs, translated by Salomón de la Selva (November).

NOTES

Mr. Lew R. Sarett lives in Urbana as a professor of English in the University of Illinois. His knowledge of the Chippewa language and customs is due to his having spent nine seasons with the tribe while earning money as a guide in their country in order to get an education. He has made use of this knowledge in lectures under the Redpath Lyceum Bureau, but his interpretations have never before been published. Mr. Sarett is of mixed Lithuanian, Russian and French blood—a combination which doubtless enriches his teaching of English.

Iris Tree (Mrs. Curtis Moffat) is a daughter of the late Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, the well-known English actor.

Mr. Shirley Harvey was class poet in 1916 at Dartmouth College, and afterwards instructor of English in the Engineering School of Tufts College. His book, *The Christmas Trail and Other Poems*, was privately printed at Concord in 1916.

Isabel Howe Fiske (Mrs. Conant) lives in Wellesley Hills, Mass. She has contributed to various magazines.

Mr. Harold Crawford Stearns, of New York, has contributed to most of the special magazines, but has not yet published a volume.

Mr. Charles L. Sherwood, of London, Ohio, has also printed various poems, but not in a book.

The three other poets of this number are well known to our readers:

Mr. Richard Aldington, the young English imagist, author of *Images* (Four Seas Co.) and *Reverie* (The Clerk's Press, Cleveland, O.), has been fighting for two years or more with the British army in Flanders.

Mr. Max Michelson, of Chicago, though a frequent contributor to POETRY, the London *Egoist*, *Others*, etc., has not yet published a volume.

Miss Helen Louise Birch, of Chicago, has published a number of songs through various music firms, and POETRY introduced her as a poet in October of last year.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

Eidola, by Frederic Manning. E. P. Dutton & Co.

The Old Road to Paradise, by Margaret Widdemer. Henry Holt & Co.

June Dusk and Other Poems, by Florence Nash. Geo. H. Doran Co.

Moonrise, by Herbert J. Hall. Moffat, Yard & Co.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

- Day by Day*, by Patrice Oliver. The Roycrofters. E. Aurora, N. Y.
On Heaven and Poems Written on Active Service, by Ford Madox Hueffer. John Lane Co.
My Erratic Pal, by Alfred Clark, N. Z. M. C. John Lane Co.
Coal and Candlelight, by Helen Parry Eden. John Lane Co.
The Forest-Altar and Other Poems, by James Edward Richardson. Privately printed, Philadelphia.
Japanese Prints, by John Gould Fletcher. Four Seas Co.
City Tides, by Archie Austin Coates. Geo. H. Doran Co.
The Sad Years, by Dora Sigerson (Mrs. Clement Shorter). Geo. H. Doran Co.
Memory Poems of War and Love, by A. Newberry Choyce. John Lane Co.
The Drums in Our Street, by Mary Carolyn Davies. Macmillan Co.
Outcasts in Beulah Land and Other Poems, by Roy Helton. Henry Holt & Co.
Can Grande's Castle, by Amy Lowell. Macmillan Co.
Vagabond Verse, by Noxon Toomey. Privately printed, St. Louis.
Earth Spiritual, by Lala Fisher. Caxton Printing Works, Sydney, Australia.
The Tree of Life, by John Gould Fletcher. Chatto & Windus, London.
The Merrymakers, by Louise Ayres Garnett. Rand, McNally & Co.
 ANTHOLOGIES, PLAYS, AND A TRANSLATION:
The Coming Dawn—a War Anthology in Prose and Verse, edited by Theodora Thompson. John Lane Co.
The Home Book of Verse, selected and arranged by Burton Egbert Stevenson. Henry Holt & Co.
The American Spirit—A Basis for World Democracy, edited by Paul Monroe and Irving E. Miller. World Book Co., Yonkers.
Wisconsin Plays—Second Series, by S. Marshall Ilsley, Laura Sherry, Howard Mumford Jones, Thornton Gilman. B. W. Heusch.
The Bhagavad-Gita or The Battle of Life—the Ancient Poem of India: Trans. into English verse. Abstract Truth Society, Chicago.

PROSE:

- Pavannes and Divisions*, by Ezra Pound. Alfred A. Knopf.
The Life of Lamartine (2 vols.), by H. Remsen Whitehouse. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Rupert Brooke—a Memoir, by Edward Marsh. John Lane Co.
The Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century, by William Lyon Phelps. Dodd, Mead & Co.

 Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

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PEACE

S UDDENLY bells and flags!
Suddenly—door to door—
Tidings! Can we believe,
We who were used to war?

Yet we have dreamed her face,
Knowing her light must be,
Knowing that she must come.
Look—she comes, it is she!

Tattered her raiment floats,
Blood is upon her wings.
Ah, but her eyes are clear!
Ah, but her voice outrings!

Look—she is here, she lives!
Beauty has died for her.
Soon where the shrapnel fell
Petals shall wake and stir.

Agnes Lee

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE HARP

Strike—strike!
Already the strings of me quiver,
Vibrate,
With the imagining of your fingers . . .
Strike!—set free these aching sounds!
Strike harshly, wildly—loud,
O strong, beautiful!—
Till the strings cry out,
Till the strings are torn with the fierceness of your hands'
delight,
With the agony of their own music,
With the agony of their releasing.

Broken.
Still.

I HAVE FOUND MY BELOVED

I have found my beloved in the time of apple blossoms—
O pink blossoms, white blossoms, fragrance of love!
I have found my beloved in the time of apple blossoms—
O beauty and fragrance!
Soon will the apples push out their green sides,
Soon will they round into happy red—
The boughs of the trees will bend and be weighed down
with that ripe burden,

With that rich burden of fruit,
That fragrance of red!

STATURE

I must stand on tiptoe to reach your lips,
I must stand on tiptoe in my soul to reach you,
To reach the height of my own love.
It is what I want—to have you tall.

NAME

My name is beautiful to me when you say it;
A new name.
No one ever had this name before:
Your voice changes it.
It is a new name,
Sacred;
Never till now spoken, or any touch laid on it.

DIFFERENCE

I say so many things, I cannot understand your silence.
I give so much, I cannot undersand your always taking.
I change myself so willingly to please you,
I cannot understand that you have never thought of changing.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

UNITY

Your love is terrible.
Oh, do not love me so much!
Sometimes there are moments
Fear comes to me because of our love;
That it is a prison about me,
That it owns me,
Owns the separateness of me.

Oh, let us be two again!
We who have been so intricately one,
Let us be two.
For finally there is never one,
And unity is but annihilation.
Dissolve me from this closeness;
Give me back to myself,
Myself to my own self again.
Oh, let us be two. Two!

Beloved!

HAPPINESS BETRAYS ME

Happiness betrays me—
Happiness slays me!

Sorrow was kind and loneliness was my sweet companion,
Denial gave me good gifts.
Now freedom is a bondage upon me

And smoothness slackens my feet.
I will find my way back to the thorns;
I will find my way back again to the good thorns and steep-
ness.

Happiness betrays me—
Happiness slays me.

TRIUMPH

O Triumph, dear Triumph,
Splendor of self-delight and exaltation,
I have felt you in little moments,
Moments of nothingness,
More than in great times of applause.
I am alone, walking or dancing—
Suddenly you come
And lift up my hands as if they would reach the stars.
I could shake the stars and the world for sheer merriment of
power;
I will run laughing and shouting with you through all the
streets of the world!

INTERLUDE

I will dance and wrap myself with drooping veils about me,
Turquoise blue and green and blowing amber.
How their pale, their weightless touch
Will be delight upon me,
Their dusky colors melting and returning.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

I will raise them before me,
I will let them fall from me;
Every swaying movement
Sways them and curves them,
Every swaying movement
Sways them and folds them—
Dropping about me,
Down from my shoulders over my fingers;
Laying their touch over my fingers,
Over my feet drooping and dropping with grace upon me.

Flowing of color, flowing of shadow, flowing of motion,
Flowing upon me, flowing from me—
O sliding shadow, sliding color, veils of motion!

AT THE MUSEUM

At last we let each other go,
And I left you;
Left the demand and the desire of you,
And all our windings in and out and bickerings of love.
And I was wandering
Through corridors and rooms of pictures,
Waiting for my mind to sharpen again
Out of its blur.

Now was stern air to breathe,
High, rational,
Clear of you and me.

Helen Hoyt

The medals in their ordered cases,
Round and clean-edged,
Cooled me.
The tossing and tumbling of my body
Drew itself into form,
Into poise,
Looking at their fine symmetry of being.

MEMORY

I can remember our sorrow, I can remember our laughter;
I know that surely we kissed and cried and ate together;
I remember our places and games, and plans we had—
The little house and how all came to naught—
Remember well:
But I cannot remember our love,
I cannot remember our love.

OH WE SHALL MEET

Oh we shall meet,
But how shall be that meeting?
Oh we shall meet,
But there is no repeating
The look, the word, the laugh that used to be—
There is no meeting now for you and me.
We shall be there—in the room together, near—
But the old delight that made old meetings dear

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Will not return, the leaping of will to will:
Only a husky word, a trembling that tries to be still;
And we shall look at each other then, unbelieving the past,
Knowing that even our sorrow could not last.

ASCENSION

Our love died and went into the grave.
We piled stones upon it.
Both of us piled stones upon it.
We did not dream that it would ever rise again;

Now it has come forth
With new life, not as its old life;
With radiance about its head:
Lifted apart from us; beyond the unhappy clay.

THE ROOT

Love faded in my heart—
I thought it was dead.
Now new flowers start,
Fresh leaves outspread.
Why do these flowers upstart
And again the leaves spread?
Oh, when will it be dead—
This root that tears my heart!

Helen Hoyt

VOLUNTEERS

TEARS, IDLE TEARS!

Tom Shelley, Virginia

I was born in Ireland,
I've been in every country of the world,
I am an American citizen seventeen years,
I'm only thirty-nine years old;
And yet, in spite of all that,
The army won't enlist me as a soldier
For the great war.

I've been a sailor over twelve years,
And can tell about the building of ships—
Ever since the first one was made
Of the hollow of a tree.
And still they won't take me in—
This war is hard on me.

I can teach how to cut a dug-out canoe,
Or stretch one of skins;
I've sailed in a reed raft off Australia,
And in the surf boats of Madras;
I can help to build ships,
And explain how the keel of a vessel
Is only the old log minus the dugout.
Ask me why the fo'castle of old Egyptian ships
Was shaped up into a neck-like thing,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

And finished off into the figure of a bird,
Or a beast?—
It was religion; that's what it was.
I can tell all that,
And yet they won't enlist me.

I can talk about paddle propulsion, galley oars,
Sail, steam and oil;
And there's not a splice, eye-splice, chain-splice,
Or rigging shroud that I don't know.
I've a union card too,
And yet I can't make a hit.

I've been wrecked off the Brazilian coast,
Where the bay of the Amazon looks like another ocean,
And off the east coast of Ireland too,
Almost in sight of the rocks of Holyhead;
I know what sea power is, and that no man or nation
Will ever command the waves, for sea power
Is not from guns, but from winds.
I know everything I've said,
And yet I can't get a show.

They take these young fellows—
Why can't I enlist too?
I can do more, and I know more,
And I can stand more and fight more
In a day than any of them.

Arthur D. Rees

CARES THAT INFEST THE DAY

Frank Maine, Maine

Two months ago I left railroading,
And from that hour—leisure and peace!
Yesterday I came here from New York,
On a tour to the West,
But I listened to the tap of a drum, and enlisted.

My coming here was only a step
In my usual path, in drifting westward
To the wheat fields for the harvest.
I follow the growth of the grasses:
First to Texas where the wheat ripens early;
Then with the prairie people
And the southern harvesters
From field to field I go
Northward up the Missouri and Red rivers
Until I reach the wheat bonanzas of the Dakotas;
And then northward still,
Beyond the "blue stems" of Minnesota
And up to Manitoba
Where the harvesting ends, for the wheat
Can not grow when Winter shrivels the grass.

Then southward I would turn
To the orange groves and fruit fields
Of California, drifting perhaps to Mexico
And the oil fields for the winter;

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

And after that, begin the round again,
And wander to Texas for spring ploughing;
And later northward once more,
With summer returning for its harvest.
It's a good life, but beyond me now.

LONGINGS FOR HOME

Charles Hastings, Delaware

My home is in Laurel.
But they speak my name there no more.
Yet the place is still green in my memory,
And I'm only twenty five—I may be forgiven.

But tell this to my people there for me,
And put it in their paper:
That I've wandered many miles from home
Since the dark night when I ran away;
And now I've enlisted for the war.
My path is too winding and hidden
For them ever to find clues of me,
But I'd like my people to know that I understand now
How a weary life and destroyed ways
Take many a man away from home.

I know too the selfishness of the stony cities now;
For in them my Buddy and I
Once threw dice for the only job to be had.
And I took to the road and its taunts,

Arthur D. Rees

And he took the job.
But both of us had known together
The cold glitter of the stars over us all night,
When the heart-sides of us thumped hard
And were sad.

But I want my people to know nothing of that.
Tell them only that after seven years' wandering
My heart is growing peaceful again
And my face bright with looking toward my home;
And that the army is my refuge,
Where I'm happy and content.

Tell them too that on my first furlough
I'll be returning to them in the old house.
Returning! returning!—
There's in that word something beautiful
To me now!

But my young laughter is returning in silence,
And my fierce waywardness is returning in sorrow—
Tenderly to the mother who thought
She would see her son no more.

UNSEEING THE SEEN

Joseph Quinn, Carney's Point

I was a chemical worker in a powder factory,
Sometimes even cutting the powder myself,
In preparation for other people to shoot it.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

But now I've enlisted for the army,
Wanting to do my duty, I suppose,
And shoot it myself.

And then—I'll tell you—
I want to forget a few things about women,
But haven't yet discovered the formula.
The harder I hunt the more I remember,
And the more I pretend indifference
The crazier is my madness.

When I told the recruiting officers I was not married,
I meant it in the sight of God,
For I knew they couldn't see as God sees.
I'm not living with my wife at any rate;
Another fellow is, and I'm going to war.

How well I remember the long kiss in the dark,
That made her mine!
Something I would and wouldn't forget!
Oh, well—it's easy to be chaste when you're old,
And to say what you think's best to be done:
But virgins won't go to virgins for advice;
And so we all live and learn,
And agree at last, it may be,
With the scrupulosity of the passionless.

Yet after all why should I care?
It's only that I can't help caring—that's all.

Arthur D. Rees

The finest moments of life anyway
Are moments of some intoxication,
And each mouth must drink from its own goblet,
Be it even the cup of wrath.

All battles are for the beauty of women!
Falling into love, flying into passion—
This invaded Belgium;
And nuptial fires kindled the flames of Louvain.

THE MELANCHOLY PLAINT OF THE RUSSIAN SONG

Ilya Vladimir, Pennsylvania

I was born in Russia, but I am fighting for this land,
Because I make my living here—
Yet saving none of it.
In my merry moods my motto is,
Keep money coming and going—
Then you'll always have some.
Many people's money is mouldy.

But in other moods I forget about that,
For I'm always looking across the seas
To the Russian plains, and longing
For the broad flood of the Mother Volga river,
And the gloomy forests of Smolensk.
I can see the lynxes fighting
With the falcons there,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

And even hear the ravens croaking at night
As they divide the dead.

My mother I left there, and my sister;
My mother weeping as a river runs—
For that's how we sing it in our old songs—
And my sister weeping as a streamlet flows;
Their tears falling like the tender dew
Upon the willow bushes and the moss.

They don't know where I am now,
Yet I can almost hear them singing of me,
As in our ancient poem:
"Thou bringst, O Sun, thy warmth and joy to all—
Where doth thy burning beam on Ilya fall?
And hast thou in the desert dried his bow,
With sorrow sealed his quiver, and with woe?"
And I can almost see them wandering everywhere for grief:
Into the forests of dark oak,
Where Sorrow cuts them like an axe;
Into the fields where it mows them like a scythe,
And into a damp earth grave
That Sorrow, like a spade, has dug for them
Among the weeds, the beggars and the blind.

I hope none of this is true,—
But I don't know!

Arthur D. Rees

AMERICA

She is young and beautiful—my country—
Mother of many children.

Years ago,

A slim girl running on sea sand,
She heard Niagara shouting the message of mountains,
And the great lakes singing softly
Of prairies that swing in the wind.

How could she stay, keeping soft and white her rich and
powerful hands?

She rose and walked like the sun into the west:

Sowing, reaping, felling the forests,

Digging out coal and iron and gold from the hills.

Onward, outward—

Past rivers like a sea,

And mountains that snowily, secretly, kiss the moon—

Out to shining Arizona athirst in the sun

And Oregon shaggy with firs by her northern ocean,

Whom the silver Sierras link together forever.

And she gathered the children of many races into her arms,

And said, "Hate dies here—be brothers."

She lifted the humble to the high place,

And the proud she rebuked with a laugh.

At ease in her strength she lay dreaming

When the heat of the day was done.

But suddenly—far away—

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Out of the thick black night, out of the past,
Came the terrible booming of guns,
The tramp of armies marching over fallen towers,
Over cottages collapsing into dust.
And through the iron clamor she heard agony calling—
The bitter cries of children starved and driven,
Of young girls ravished,
Of boys ripped open on the trench-strung field;
And the dull groans of the old
Prodded from the flaming door.

Once more the incredible thing—
The tyrant gorged and ruthless
Spitting red war in the face of the world!
Once more Freedom at bay—threatened, defiant—
Calling her chosen,
Lifting her rainbow-colored flags to the sun!

My country,
Beautiful and strong,
Startled, slowly arising,
Hearing at last the insult,
Feeling the crimson mist in her eyes,
My country stood up tall to the height of the world—
Straight and tall,
From the blue Caribbean at her feet
To her coronal of islands
Strung from the Arctic sea.
And she summoned her states,

Harriet Monroe

And breathed in their ears the iron vow of war—
War to the end, to the death, war to the life,
War of the free, for the free, till the world is freed.

She gathered her armies,
Her millions of sons,
And loosed them like flakes of snow to the storm,
Bidding them cover and smother and put out forever
The abysmal abominable fires.
In massive drifts she hurled them,
Over land and sea and through blue trails of air—
Crystal souls of youth,
That seized the sun in a flash
And flung it to whatever eye would see,
Spending, giving their light, lest it be put out in the wind.
She bade them move innumerable, mass on mass,
To smother and quench forever the infernal fires,
And nourish the new spring—
The flower-fringed hope of the world.

O my country,
Seeker of freedom,
How shall she pause in the ways of peace or war
On her long march toward the far-off invisible goal—
The city of white towers,
The city of love,
Where the nations of the earth shall meet in joy together,
And the souls of men shall be free!

Harriet Monroe

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

LA NEIGE A POUGHKEEPSIE

Lorsque la tourmente eut vêtu
Chaque toit d'un glaçon pointu,
Couvert chaque route de neige,
Poughkeepsie avait hier, comme par sortilège,
Transformé sa grisaille en de fraîches clartés.
La neige est couleur de gâité!
Le ciel est gris, la terre est blanche,
Sous l'avalanche.

L'endroit dont je veux vous parler
N'est point bati pour s'exiler.
L'ennui s'y trouve en étalage—
C'est plus froid qu'une ville et moins beau qu'un village;
Mais sous les fleurs d'hiver Poughkeepsie a souri—
La neige avait partout fleuri!
Le ciel est gris, la terre est blanche,
Sous l'avalanche.

Quittant son air morne et banal,
Poughkeepsie en costume hivernal
Prend la grace d'une bourgeoise
En sa robe de mariée! Elle apprivoise
Le voyageur qui passe, et sur ses froids chemins
La neige a tracé des jardins!
Le ciel est gris, la terre est blanche,
Sous l'avalanche.

Lysiane Bernhardt

Le champ se confond aux chemins,
Et chaque plaine sans confins
Est une steppe en robe claire.
"On n'entend plus marcher les vivants sur la terre,"
Souffle un mort à son frère; "il doit neiger là-haut!"
La neige a donné son assaut!
Le ciel est gris, la terre est blanche,
Sous l'avalanche.

Décembre est triste à ce qu'on dit;
Mais quand la neige resplendit,
Et, changeant les pierres en marbre,
D'une maison fait un palais, et quand chaque arbre
Porte une floraison, riez, gosses et gens,
La neige est un autre printemps!
Le ciel est gris, la terre est blanche,
Sous l'avalanche.

Lysiane Bernhardt

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE GARDEN OF THE WEST

(The Jackal is the only animal that ventures into the Desert. The ancient Egyptians believed that every person had a soul in the form of some animal, a creature within the creature. At death the soul was released, and was escorted across the Desert by the Jackal to a mysterious Heaven called the Garden of the West.)

A Butterfly. We leave the yellow palms behind,
The yellow-green date-palms that stand
At the borders of the land.
There are no talking leaves out here.
The desert way is blind to me—
Will the white sand be kind to me?
What is it that I fear
As I leave the palms behind?

The Jackal. The sand is neither cruel nor kind.
I count the toll, I count the toll—
Here a soul and there a soul.
Day and night, night and day,
Over the white, silent way,
To and fro
I go,
Without rest,
From the Fountain of the Nile,
To the Garden of the West.

The Butterfly. I played with flowers yesterday—
Are there no flowers by the way?
Is the Desert never stained

With pomegranate petals, rained
To the sand by some light wind
Sweet with peach or tamerind?
We leave the singing boys behind—
Their songs were kind.
Jackal, Jackal, what shall I find?

The Jackal. There was singing yesterday,
And tomorrow boys will sing;
But today you and I
Will not hear anything.
There is lotus by the Nile,
Stranger flowers in the West,
But the way between is not
Adorned for any guest.
You will find no songs nor flowers nor rest.

The Butterfly. Jackal, Jackal, when we reach
The Garden's lovely gate,
Will there be one to welcome us
With honey delicate?
With flower wine and pollen dew,
Who will wait for me and you?

The Jackal. First there is the scent of it,
Faint—sweet—far.
There's a little wind that tells
Where the lemons are.
Birds that crossed the sand with me
Sing in a high silver tree.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The Butterfly. Jackal, Jackal, yesterday

I was a girl.
Last night I felt my wings
Suddenly unfurl.
Last night a butterfly
Saw a little girl die.

The Jackal. Over this white, silent way,

Day and night, night and day,
Souls are led by such as I,
All surprised that bodies die;
Every soul stirred to surprise,
When its body dies.

The Butterfly. Jackal, I was round and sweet.

I had small swift hands and feet,
And a high, silver voice,
Fit for little tinkling words,
Sweet as honey on fresh curds.
I was made to rejoice;
I was made for love, men said—
Brown of skin and eyes, with red
Parted lips; and I was fed
With love words that singing boys
Thought about me in their hearts.
I was skilled in those girl arts
That are piercing sweet. I had
All that makes boy glad.

The Jackal. Day and night, night and day,

Over this white, silent way,

Such as you and such as I
Still go by, still go by.
Milk child and beard of white,
Power and glory, faith and might,
Little love-girl such as you,
Trailing wings of gold and blue:
All go the way I know—
Sad, glad, eager, distressed,
From the Fountain of the Nile
To the Garden of the West.

The Butterfly. Jackal, Jackal, he sang to me,
He touched me tenderly.
He brought me lilies wet with rain,
White lilies without any stain
Of color on their loveliness,
Their perfume a caress.
The singing boys seemed far away
That day.
I did not hear the birds, nor see
The people go by me.
I only knew
A mist of tears, with his face
Shining through.

The Jackal. Day by day and year by year
Tales like this I hear.
To every soul its bitterness
Seems like loneliness.
To every soul love is shown

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Standing alone.
Every love seems to be
Unlike love's great company.
"Never was love like mine!" they say,
Day and night, night and day.

The Butterfly. Jackal, I was slim and straight,
With little round breasts delicate,
Throat curved like a crescent moon,
Bud that would be flower soon.
Warm and quick pulses were mine—
I was like a draught of wine
Lifted to his thirsty mouth!—
Like a soft wind from the South
Touching him caressingly,
Wrapping him about, when he
Saw a singing boy go by
Silently,
With his lute unstrung, at rest,
And a lily on his breast.

The Jackal. The days go by, the days go by,
The same sun crosses the same blue sky,
The same stars shine in the depth above,
And men still dream of undying love.

The Butterfly. Jackal, it was a little thing!
The boy said he could no longer sing.
He showed me his lute, unstrung, at rest,
And I gave him a lily to wear at his breast.

The Jackal. The days go by, the days go by,
And still there are gardens sweet with bloom,
Lovers vow and lovers die,
Tomorrow's lovers stir in the womb.

The Butterfly. Jackal, Jackal, I saw his face—
It was strange to me.
Then I saw a shining knife
Flash suddenly.
I felt my wings of blue and gold
Unfold—unfold.

The Jackal. First there is the scent of it—
Camphor and myrrh,
Cinnamon and cedar
And heavy juniper.
Then there is the sound of it,
Flute and canzonet.
They who reach the Garden
Soon forget.

The Butterfly. Jackal, Jackal, how do you know
That souls forget?
You come and go at the Garden's gate,
But have you entered yet?

The Jackal. A soul-less thing am I,
That cannot die.
The gate is shut to me
Eternally.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

But there is a bird that sings
In the silver tree—
A red bird like a jewel set
In a filagree
Of little, shining leaves—
And he sings to me:

*Come with your souls, for here await
All garden joys primordiate.
The wind comes over a deep blue pool,
It is never too warm, it is never too cool,
The roses are never open wide,
And no one knows that he has died.*

*He who comes through the garden's gate,
Is never afraid or desolate.
On little paths and wind and wind
He shall unwearied pleasures find.
He shall know beauty's last secret,
And he shall forget, he shall forget!*

*Come with your souls, there is no fate
That death shall not alleviate.
I am the Voice that calls to men—
Deep in their hearts they hear me when
I sit and sing in the silver tree,
"You were not and you shall not be!"*

The Butterfly. Jackal, Jackal, I would not go!—
I would remember, I would know

When he comes over the still white way
That you and I have come today.
Jackal, Jackal, let me wait
And watch for him at the Garden's gate.

The Jackal. Day by day and year by year
Prayers like this I hear.
Every soul would wait to say
Some last word about yesterday.
Every soul, if it could,
Would be better understood.

The Butterfly. Jackal, what is the scent that comes—
Breath of flowers and fragrant gums?
Jackal, what is the song I hear,
So piercing high and clear?
Jackal, Jackal, I see
A shining, silver tree!

The Jackal. Your wings are trembling,
Gold and blue thing.
They flutter and unfold,
Blue and gold.
You saw a girl die,
Butterfly.
I may not rest
In the Garden of the West.
The way across the Desert
I have shown—
Now I go back alone!

COMMENT

CHRISTMAS INDEED

THE signs swing high for a Christmas of deeper joy than this country has known since the abolition of slavery, or than the elder world has known since the Marseillaise was first sung in Paris. It will be a joy sanctified by the sorrows of sacrifice, and deepened by a hope which must persist through whatever disorders delay its fruition.

For, looking back over the mortal hazards of the past four years, one can find no earlier moment so indulgent to the world's hope of a new era, an era of freedom and fulfilment for the oppressed peoples of the earth. The mediaeval craft of feudalism—with its autocrat-commanders, its crew of super-slaves, its guns of force and murder, its camouflage of pseudo-scientific efficiency—has been rammed, smashed to scrap and splinters, by that trim, slim, powerful modern destroyer, the armed will-to-freedom of the democratic nations. At no earlier moment of these sanguinary four years and four months could the end of the war have brought such confidence that this deed had been completely done.

"Wars have a way of deciding things," said a wise friend in the chaos of the first upheaval, when war seemed to most of us nothing but obliteration and destruction—an impossible absurdity, an anachronism. If this war decides that kings must go; that weak peoples, whether formed into states or not, shall be protected and encouraged instead of

Christmas Indeed

coerced; that the nations shall gather together in closer brotherhood and rule their intercourse by the moral law: then it will be worth all it has cost in precious lives and heaped-up treasure, in ruin and agony and desolation. If its flaming night lead us to such a dawn, we must rejoice on Christmas day, lift our hearts high above their sorrows.

Rejoice, but not forget. Rejoice, but not relax. The spiritual discipline which has brought the world to a point of high resolve, has but begun if the new purposes are to be achieved. Great leaders are needed as never before for the huge international task; and powerful crowds to follow them and achieve it. It may be that the hardest fight is before us, for now the foe is not armed and uniformed, set out in battle array with noisy guns and grenades; but secret, silent, insidious, in our own ranks, even in our own hearts.

We have need of all the constructive forces for the re-making of the world. And foremost of the constructive forces, especially the getting-together forces, are the arts. The arts, even the language-arts, are universal; they unite the peoples of the earth. If there is to be, either actually or spiritually, a league of nations, the arts of the different nations must be developed and encouraged toward expressiveness and mutual understanding.

In this country, peopled by all the races of the earth, we have the greatest opportunity for international sympathies ever offered to a powerful nation. We were all deeply moved last month when the Czecho-Slovaks met in Inde-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

pendence Hall and signed their declaration of independence on the table sacred to our own. But unless we feel the meaning of this symbol, unless we comprehend the ideals of these resurrected states now struggling each for its place and flag, we shall lose the affection and gratitude which they accord us now. From these races should come deep enrichment to American intellectual and artistic life; but rather if we accept what they bring us, if we encourage their separate racial individualities, than if we try to make them over to the prevailing Anglo-Saxon pattern.

This magazine's experience may serve as a hint and prophecy of that enrichment. Last month two of our three prizes went to immigrants from Syria and Italy, and during the past six years of our history many races have been represented in POETRY, either by poems written in English by citizens or residents of foreign birth, or by translations, adaptations, interpretations from their literature and folklore. Not only France, Italy and Belgium have been brought nearer to us in this way, but also nations more remote—Russia, Serbia, the Ukraine, Roumania, Syria, Armenia, China, Japan, Bengal; as well as a few nearer home—Peru, Nicaragua, and certain of our own aboriginal tribes. All this beauty and racial sincerity should be preserved, not destroyed; loved and cherished, not ignored. We of these United States possess the nucleus of an enlightened internationalism.

On that vivid and romantic Thursday, the seventh of November, when the cosmopolite crowds of our cities took

in their own hands, prematurely but with spontaneous rapture, the celebration of the end of the war, one truth was borne in upon me through the paper snow-storm, the gaudy improvised processions, the chorus of laughter and tooting and yells, the flicker and flutter of ten million flags of the many allied nations—all that wild irresistible drama of joy—the truth that we, *e pluribus unum*, are already a union of many races, that we have slipped far away from the Puritan tradition, from the Anglo-Saxon genealogical tree; and that there is no reason why we should not become as freely and multitudinously expressive as a forest of many kinds of trees shaking their innumerable leaves in the wind.

H. M.

TRIBUTE TO JOYCE KILMER

As friend of an earlier time

If my tribute is tardy, at least my friendliness is not—I am informed of Joyce Kilmer's virtues by at least an intimacy of probably ten years' earlier knowledge of his charms. I hold him among the quiet lovers of the earth, for Joyce without love would not be Joyce. No term could have fitted him then better than "dear Joyce," and I see no reason for the change even though I did not see him for several years before his sudden departure. Joyce was dear to anyone who had the qualities of endearment, and the understanding. He had the quiet way of being genuine. His fervors, as I knew him, were chiefly for

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

poetry then; and if I am not wrong, he enlarged them to include the larger, to him at least, aspects of religion. I shall want to believe in his then rumored conversion to the catholic faith after a reading of *The Hound of Heaven*, because, as I have said, he had the heart to adore and the will to worship. He was naturally "there" in his convictions, and that poem by so great and so genuine a poet would certainly have moved him strongly on the way, as it is certain to move anyone who has the gift for getting poetry—even without the ecstatic uplift, the frantical pursuit involved in the theme. The bravery of Joyce was not and could not have been boisterous; it was strong in its simplicity and its reality. He had the faith in beauty which showed him the way to his heroisms. He was not sham ever. Setting aside the whether-or-no of his greatness as an artist in poetry, it is safe to assume that he is entirely worthy of association among the poets who have died for the cause at hand, as well as the many of the good ones among the living who are at least devoted, however silently, however openly, to the idealism inherent in it. Some may speak, and some may act, and some may wish to speak and act. Joyce was a simple actor, without affectation, without histrionic gesture. His acting would be just the "doing"; his death proves that. He did what he could in an unoffending way. He had intelligence of a fine order to contribute, and he (and I do not see how he could have changed from the sure indications of our esthetic youth, and his younger manhood) had only the wish to fulfil the

Tribute to Joyce Kilmer

mission of beauty conferred upon him through talent, and it may be real genius; which was the business of heroism. His sense of command could only have been equal to his quality to obey. He obeyed the laws of poetry so well in their significance, that he must splendidly have shown his gifts as soldier for the laws he so ardently wished to serve.

I speak across the years in his behalf as almost boy, for though I was then a little older, we were on very common terms of friendship, with a very special interest in things poetic. He loved the simplest things then, because he was himself among them perhaps the simplest; so easy to understand for his unmistakable humanisms, both as poet and as man. It was the period of *The Summer of Love*—first book I think, and full of first book's ardors and preferences. I never thought of Joyce as "bright" in the cheap sense of sophistication in books. I never even thought of him as so "clubby" as the list of names of the societies to which he belonged now indicates. I never thought anything about him really, because there was enough to think of him, a warm gentleness, insuperable boyish faith in things worthy of faith, and a gift for the quieter intimacies of two or several loving the same thing, which was more apt then to be poetry than any other special thing. Being the more unobtrusive radical in my esthetic tastes, I never really knew just how much we got together in matters of art, for I seldom have that kind of factitious relationships with anyone. In the sense of association of differences of

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

tastes, I was something essentially on the outside with Joyce Kilmer. We respected each other in the manner of friends for these probable differences. I never came together in the same sets, as an ambitious person. I saw him out of hours, so to speak. If I did not care so much for his poetic company, it was so slight a difference that I never considered it important. I am not of Joyce's camp now, poetically speaking, and yet I know the quality to be genuine in him, and will leave assertion to those who want to stretch claims for dead men. It is for me a sadness, the wish to overstate one's case in the hour of sympathy. I myself would never say "great" about anyone or anything until I could be sure of it; but it is easy to say genuine, because it is true.

Joyce Kilmer is, I think, just as good as Brooke and Seeger one way or the other. These men will live not by the wondrous achievement that is claimed for them, but by the fixed ardor that was in them for the ideals of poetry. It is best to set aside affectations, even in the presence of personal privation. And if you knew Joyce Kilmer you would surely say something is missing from our so obvious earth. If there is a sure state of heaven and a certainty of continuity in that place, I am willing to believe that Joyce is there, just for the cleanliness and the sincerity of him. If he prayed, I am sure he prayed; as when he smiled or confided there was no mistaking these attitudes in him. He had a fine fund of laughter in his eyes alone, and made your moment rich with an affluence

Tribute to Joyce Kilmer

of genuine warmth. He looked at you, his qualities. My addresses to him in person, though they shall never reach him in the ways we think we may reach those who are endeared to us and who by strange evidences are "not here," will somehow strike their note. I am quite on the outer circle of this eternal event, geographically speaking, but it does not prevent me from raising an old-time voice in praise of the first years of knowing Joyce Kilmer, and I say "dear Joyce" now to him as I have frequently written it to him from the Maine woods where then the *Summer of Love* came as sentimental tribute to a something that made us glad to know each other. And so it is, and shall remain forever "dear Joyce" for me; not Joyce as the latest among heroes, not Joyce as the least or the greatest among poets, but simply Joyce, a fine thing living in a fine quiet way.

Dear Joyce, I salute you with a faithful heart. You have always held the old place in my perhaps seemingly so vague, and some might even say so "vagrant," esteem. I do not ever lose or discard essences, Joyce; I retain the flavors of those entities that were ever rich to my sense, and you are most certainly among them. How fine must be the faith in renewals and recoveries! What a brightness it would lend to the swift going of such as you, who made us somehow fond of them, who knew the deeper shades of friendship. The beauties of death and heroism are not for the conspicuous alone; they are not merely for men with a name. We must confer them upon the multitudes of the

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

nameless, if only that they are men, or boys, with a strange and certain feeling in them of an intangible something sublime in the pursuance of the office or charge entrusted them. The singer may sing of such beauties, but the voiceless leave no clue, excepting the very certainty of their humanisms, and the somehow inevitable pride in sacrifice. They are among the many who smiled, the smile that is in itself among the deathless victories. Joyce was one who smiled for the world, unstintedly; he literally had the heart for smiling. It was the cherished inevitability of him as a person; fine, and distinguished in this fineness. It is best to remember what we have and not what we lose. If you had Joyce however slightly, or however intimately as friend, you had a something genuine, and it did not fail of its sure yet simple confidence, and you had his presence to remember.

I want to remember you ardently at this hour, dear Joyce. A pretty piece of symbolism that you should have belonged to the "Rainbow Division"; surely you should be at home in that company with all your ardors and faiths to pour. You are, I am certain, captain in it now.

Marsden Hartley

REVIEWS

CARL SANDBURG'S NEW BOOK

Cornhuskers, by Carl Sandburg. Henry Holt & Co.

Recently, I overheard two stenographers attack the meaning of the line, "My country, 'tis of thee"—offspring of *God Save the King*. They couldn't arrive at the sense, if any, of the phrase, "'tis of thee," until one of the girls settled dispute and eavesdropper by concluding: "It's poetry—and poetry always sounds wrong."

Cornhuskers never sounds wrong. It's true of the man and to the man who set it down. Every man who does this is contributing a new form to art. Such a man is a maker, deserving of the rare name, poet. I can't imagine Sandburg deliberately sitting down in studio apparel, subjecting a mood to a traditional form, inventing nice even lines and capping them with nice even rhymes. I can imagine him hiking along, down a smelly old alley, suddenly smitten with a mood, like a blow between the eyes. I can see him sticking a Pittsburg stogie into his mouth—fire and smoke in a corner of his head, a stub in one hand, moth-eaten note-book in the other—his heart haunted, eyes haunted, hands haunted, all of him haunted by the mood, and all of him concentrated into trying to get the pesky thing down, lest the pesky thing get him down. Then he slinks home, tries it in the crucible of self-criticism, or tailors it a little, sews on the buttons, surveys himself in it, and it in himself, and—mood and form as like as twins

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

—descends upon his family, and then into the open outside world. And along the Loop, at the Chin-chin-chow Club, up and down the Michigan Bull, the cry runs, not "Unto us a poem is born," but "Unto us a Sandburg." I can't imagine Sandburg sitting down to a theory. The theory comes after, as it did with Whitman. To recall an old axiom, "There is no ought in art," and to revise it somewhat—none except the ought which is enslaved by and enslaves the particular mood, adventure, tale of the individual, *per se*, who is himself, and not any other individual in the world that is, was or will be. Sandburg is such a fellow.

There are influences, yes. Something of the Whitman who loved to catalogue people and places; something of that imagism which has reduced expression to an irreducible minimum; something of the O. Henry who loved the colloquial America—or the American language, as distinguished from the English; something of the homely outlook and gesture of that other Illinoisian, Lincoln. But below and above and around these influences, and above and below and around the major Sandburg, apart from them—life. Something of himself, something of the self outside, of the particular imagination embodying the particular adventuring; something of those other selves, the other fellow, mountains, plains, cities, civilization, barbarism; something of passion, love, observation, humor, irony; something of hate, the weapon of love. Each plays its phrase in the tune that is Sandburg.

Carl Sandburg's New Book

The book is divided into five groups: *Cornhuskers*, *Persons Half Known*, *Leather Leggings*, *Haunts* and *Shenandoah*. *Prairie*, the long opening poem, is composed of glorious patches and irreconcilable bits of journalese. I feel the same enthusiasm and doubt in connection with the other long poems, *The Four Brothers*, and *Potato-blossom Songs and Jigs*. Sandburg is essentially a lyricist, and the lyricism of these three chants is sporadically interrupted. Of this, however, the poet himself is conscious when he says in *Potato-blossom*:

The story lags.

The story has no connections.

The story is nothing but a lot of plinka planka plunks.

And in the final line: "Let Romance stutter to the western stars! Excuse . . . me . . ." Otherwise, what a coon song and dance it is! I'd like to hear Bert Williams chant it, and Walker—alas, if he were only alive!—cake-walk it with his wife, Ada Walker. Maybe they'll do it in nigger-heaven, where it belongs.

River Roads introduces Sandburg's varied use of the device of repetition, *Prairie Waters by Night* his unfailing and precise marriage of sensations of eye and ear, *Early Moon* his immense devotion to mysticism in a translation of the past into terms of the future—a phase re-echoed in *Falltime*: "Is there something finished? And some new beginning on the way?" and again in the wonder-breathing chant, *Caboose Thoughts*, with its colloquial opening: "It's going to come out all right—do you know?" marching erect all the way to the colloquial close: "They get along

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

—and we'll get along." The Sandburg heaven is nothing but the common street seen upside down. It's a place where the Lord isn't even a president, but a sort of composite of his own kin of earth folk and earth things. The imagistic poem, *Loam*, concentrates this thought in three memorable stanzas—or should I say paragraphs?

Wilderness is a remarkable presentation of many-sided selfhood, with a zoo as symbol; Sandburg's self-confessed animals being, wolf, fox, hog, fish, baboon, eagle and mocking-bird. Folk who grow soft with horror in the presence of egoism won't find this blast nice. Individualists will frame it over their beds, lest they forget the refrain, "I came from the wilderness"; and its visionary twin, "I am a pal of the world." In immediate contrast, comes *Chicago Poet*: "I saluted a nobody—I saw him in a looking glass." An egoist knows himself so heartily and well that he, and no other like him, has your true humility, with its appreciation of his proportionately small stature in the measurement of distances between earth and sky. Further "persons half known" include Nancy Hanks, Inez Milholland, Adelaide Crapsey, Don Magregor, Bilbea, "Southern Pacific" Huntington and "Southern Pacific" Blithery, a washerwoman, some bull frogs, Buffalo Bill, Jazbo the singing nigger, and finally Child Janet and Child Margaret, the two Sandburgians to whom the book is dedicated. The songs hobnob with a rogue's gallery of moods in which the poet himself is one of the jail-bird cronies. In *Chicago Poet*, he steps out of his cell for a sunny morning with his kind,

and in *Jazbo*, he goes back to his cell to the tune of, "I went away asking where I came from."

Leather Leggings shows man in his multifarious mad activity making "the ball of earth—a small thing." It is the history of science reduced to a poem. The same adventure arises out of *Prayers of Steel*, from "Lay me on an anvil, O God," up to "Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars." The first group is the America of open spaces, this third group the America of cities. It is felt by an American, partly a Swede, and expressed in the American language, partly English; such is the inference and effort as told in *Jabberers*, "I rise out of the depths with my language." *Interior* is after the manner of William Carlos Williams, so Sandburg delights in confessing. It's a manner worth examining. The title—*Psalm of Those who Go Forth before Daylight*—explains itself. There are slants at many towns: Keokuk, Buffalo, the Springfield of Lincoln and Lindsay, Joliet, Natchez, New Orleans. *Testament*, reminiscent of Robert Carlton Brown, closes the group. It is cheerily addressed to "undertakers, the nanny and billy goats, the blue smoke of flowers and the dirty-fisted children" who'll have the disposal of Sandburg's remains in their keeping.

The fourth group, *Haunts*, is quietly and mellifluously a love group. The tone of the series is epitomized in the line: "To-day, let me be mono-syllabic . . . a crony of old men who wash sunlight in their fingers and enjoy slow-pacing clocks." *Mammy Hums*, concerning "the right

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

shoulder of a strong man I lean on"—with the underlying motive throughout, "Then the face of sleep must be the one face you were looking for"—is as beautiful a thing as "free verse" has ever contributed to poetry; unless you prefer *Handfuls*, a cameo of "baby-red gamblers" drifting on to "gray gamblers, handfuls again." The war group, *Shenandoah*, doesn't stand up to the other group. It is permeated for the most part with propaganda for propaganda's sake—a fault with Sandburg much more prominent in *Chicago Poems* than in *Cornhuskers*. However, *Old Timers* and the brutal *Gargoyle* are authentic as art. And the last speech in *Grass*—"I am the grass, let me work"—unconsciously prophesies the Sandburg song coming up through the soil of the future, when average poets and poetic controversy are laid away, and Carl Sandburg is laid away.

There are certain well-intentioned mortals who, as soon as they hear the mere name, poetry, quake at the knees, crumple up, grovel, and then indulge in a whole category of spasms to the tune of that monstrosity, idol-worship. There's nothing that I personally detest more than such eye-sores. They are priest and congregation of every institution and gathering where Art and Uplift are synonymous. Fellows like Sandburg—there are a number of them over here now—don't belong to such devotional conclaves. Sandburg lives on the level. If he has dealings with poetry he has them on the ground common to both, as to trees, rocks and streams. Whether it's a slugging or wrestling match they engage in, an old-fashioned foot-race, or whimsi-

cal dance, you'll find their four arms in a clinch. Any lofty lady-like pirouetting on her part, any silk-hat doffing on his—are strictly taboo. Such customs belong to the limbo of lies and hypocrisy. Whitman kicked the first of them thither; fellows like Sandburg are gradually booting the remainder. I advise anybody who is disturbed by this non-pretty theory to attend a prize-fight. That's the game—something more than a boxing contest—a man undertakes with art.

Not long ago, I was hunting about an obscure Massachusetts village in search of the lair of a certain reputable man-poet. There was no postoffice to guide me, not even a general store. Fine haven for a recluse—I thought. Sundry small boys, stray cats and dogs, couldn't direct me to him. A battered looking old gentleman of the New England of yesterday finally volunteered: "You ask them men a-huskin' corn—they'll tell you where he lives." And they did. Well, the first thing I saw on the table of this man-poet—Robert Frost, by the way—was a copy of Sandburg's *Cornhuskers*. Does the coincidence require commentary?

Alfred Kreymborg

STEPHENS AS ELEGIST AND ANTHOLOGIST

Green Branches and *Reincarnations*, by James Stephens.
Macmillan Co.

When Mr. Stephens is writing as an Englishman writes, is it not true that one misses what is perhaps most distinctive—James Stephens? His threnodies, *The Autumn in*

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Ireland 1915 and *The Spring in Ireland 1916*, although very lovely, with a familiar loveliness of phrase and texture—something that no one who cares for the classic tradition of English verse can fail to appreciate—yet do not out *Lycidas Lycidas*. One wishes somehow that Mr. Stephens had given his grief expression in his own words, or in what one would imagine might have been his own words if he had not accepted the solace of this high-lineaged English elegiac mode. This is not said for the sake of being capacious, or because one is incapable of appreciating classic values, or because one wishes a poet to fiddle forever on one string. It is simply that one wonders what Mr. Stephens would have written if he had not perhaps felt that he must write something to stack-up with *Lycidas*, *Adonais*, *Thyrsus*, or *The Scholar Gypsy*. If Mr. Stephens wanted a model, would not *Clann Cartie*, from *Reincarnations*, have been a better one?

O Wave of Cliona, cease thy bellowing,
And let mine ears forget a while to ring
At thy long, lamentable misery!
The great are dead indeed, the great are dead;
And I in little time will stoop my head
And put it under, and will be forgot
With them, and be with them, and thus be not.
Ease thee, cease thy long keening, cry no more:
End is, and here is end, and end is sore

This passage is the beginning of *The Autumn in Ireland 1915*:

It may be on a quiet mountain-top,
Or in a valley folded among hills
You take your path, and often you will stop

Stephens as Elegist and Anthologist

To hear the pleasant chatter of the rills,
The piping of a wind in branches green,
The murmuring of widely-lifted spray
As long boughs swing
And hear the twittering
Of drowsy birds when the great sun is seen
Climbing the steep horizon to the day.

Reincarnations is a book of translations, or rather adaptations, from Irish writers of from one hundred to three hundred years ago—Keating, O'Bruadair, O'Rahilly, Rafferty and others. The poems number about thirty, and in them the poets sing chiefly of such eternal themes as love, the beauty of woman, old times gone, and the poet's poverty—very much indeed of the poet's poverty. Apropos of the fact that poetry is now classed as an essential industry—although nothing is said of a minimum wage for poets!—it is perhaps pertinent to quote this from *The Apology*:

Often enough I trudge by hedge and wall.
Too often there's no money in my purse,
Nor malice in my mind ever at all.
And for my songs no person is the worse
But I who give all of my store to all.

If busybody spoke to you of it,
Say, kindly man, if kindly man do live,
The poet only takes his sup and bit;
And say, It is no great return to give
For his unstinted gift of verse and wit.

Mr. Stephens says in his *Note*, which is really a preface although inconspicuously placed at the back of the book—an undemagogical proceeding which one wishes more poets would follow: "They all sing of their poverty: Keating as a fact to be recorded among other facts, O'Rahilly in a

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

very stately and bitter complaint, and Raftery as in" [the familiar "Behold me now, with my back to the wall, playing music to empty pockets"]; "but O'Bruadair lets out of him an unending, rebellious bawl which would be the most desolating utterance ever made by man if it was not also the most gleeful."

Here is O'Bruadair's *Righteous Anger*:

The lanky hank of a she in the inn over there
Nearly killed me for asking the loan of a glass of beer:
May the devil grip the whey-faced slut by the hair,
And beat bad manners out of her skin for a year!

That parboiled imp, with hardest jaw you will see
On virtue's path, and a voice that would rasp the dead,
Came roaring and raging the minute she looked at me,
And threw me out of the house on the back of my head!

If I asked her master he'd give me a cask a day;
But she, with the beer at hand, not a gill would arrange!
May she marry a ghost and bear him a kitten, and may
The High King of Glory permit her to get the mange.

This has an eloquence that ought to console any poet for the lack of a more cumbersome endorsement of this world's goods. At least the poet has what others have not, he has his vision; and if he is twice-blessed, as these Irish poets are, he has his wit. And certainly James Stephens is twice-blessed in this respect! *Reincarnations* is a book for poets. There is much in it that they will most appreciate. One would like to quote some of the poems in praise of women, *Nancy Walsh*, or *Mary Hynes* from Raftery; and *Sean O'Cosgair* is a remarkable little poem about a young man who was drowned. But the best thing after all is to own the small book for oneself.

A. C. H.

IN THE IRISH MODE

My Ireland—Songs and Simple Rhymes, by Francis Carlin.
Henry Holt & Co.

If about half of the poems in this book were omitted, the reading would be more of a pleasure; the task of searching for the really excellent poems should not be imposed upon the reader. Mr. Carlin has a natural facility for rhymed verse, or rather for rhymed song. Much of his work is good, much only passable, and a small number of the poems are exceptional. Among the latter may be mentioned: *The Little House*, *The Virgin's Slumber Song*, *Unknown*, *My Neighbor*, *The Scotstown Visitor*, *The Three Songs*, *Keimaneigh*, *Maureen Oge*, *The Field of the Fort*; the ballads *MacSweeney the Rhymer*, *The Ballad of the Mother's Revenge*; the brief epigrams *The Cuckoo*, *Wine*, *Reflection* and *Sleep*.

Of course, as the title indicates, the poems are chiefly of Ireland and will therefore appeal especially to "the little clan" of those who are also of Ireland or devoted to the glamour of Celtic verse. But it must not be supposed that this is verse of the pseudo-Celtic school. It is, as I think, genuinely Irish and in what Thomas MacDonagh called the Irish mode. The ballads have the genuine folk or bardic quality, and only occasionally does one feel that the inspiration has not kept time with the beat of the song; as in *Gleann-na-smol*, which Burns would have done better, or in *The Dead Nun*, which makes one think regretfully of Wordsworth, perhaps all the more so because it is about

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Lucy! However, there is enough intrinsic beauty in the book to give Mr. Carlin a passport to a wider audience, if but this wider audience had been considered in the arrangement. In poems such as *The Little House* there is a delightful simplicity, all the more welcome after the undue emphasis placed upon the bizarre image by many young ultra-modern writers:

Bathing birds beneath a spout
Of mountain water screened about
With supple ferns and tufts of grass,
Are on the highway I would pass.

And little bows of colored foam
Arching mountain streams, that roam,
Beneath a bridge of stone and moss,
Are in the meadow I would cross.

But the little house where I would call
Has a ruined roof and a tumbled wall—
Beyond that streamy meadow's grass,
On the road that I shall never pass.

The last stanza of *Maureen Oge* has this simple expressive touch:

O Maureen Oge beyond the sea,
I wait not only with the rose;
For in the house where you should be
The walls are lonesome for your clothes.

One would like to quote more from the book if there were space.

A. C. H.

FIRST BOOKS OF VERSE

Renascence and Other Poems, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.
Mitchell Kennerley.

Here is a very exceptional first book, a book which is achievement rather than promise. One would have to go back a long way in literary history to find a young lyric poet singing so freely and musically in such a big world. Almost we hear a thrush at dawn, discovering the ever-renewing splendor of the morning.

Renascence gave me the only thrill I received from Mr. Kennerley's 1912 anthology, *The Lyric Year*. It was so much the best poem in that collection that probably it's no wonder it didn't receive any one of the three prizes. Reading it once more, after six years' discipline in modern poetry, I am thrilled again. The surprise of youth over the universe, the emotion of youth at encountering inexplicable infinities—that is expressed in this poem, and it is a big thing to express. Moreover, it is expressed with a certain triumphant joy, the very mood of exultant youth; and the poet gets a certain freshness and variety into a measure often stilted. The poem is too compact for quotation—it should be read entire. Possibly its spiritual motive is summed up in the couplet:

God, I can push the grass apart
And lay my finger on Thy heart!

This poem is much the biggest thing in the book; indeed, one almost sighs with fear lest life, closing in on this poet as on so many others, may narrow her scope and vision.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

It requires a rare spiritual integrity to keep one's sense of infinity against the persistent daily intrusions of the world, the flesh and the devil; but only the poet who keeps it through the years can sing his grandest song.

But even without *Renascence* the book would be exceptional. Not so much for *Interim*, though its emotion is poignantly sincere and expressed without affectation, as for some of the briefer lyrics. Such songs as *Kin to Sorrow*, *Tavern*, *The Shroud*, are perfect of their very simple and delicate kind; and one or two of the sonnets are admirable—*Time does not Bring Relief* and *Bluebeard*. A few of the best songs were first printed in *POETRY*, though we find no acknowledgment of this fact in the book; (which, by the way—let me heap coals of fire on the publisher's head—is beautifully designed and printed.) Among the poems unfamiliar to our readers perhaps *God's World* is typical of the poet's mood and manner:

O world, I can not hold thee close enough!
Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!
Thy mists, that roll and rise!
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag
And all but cry with color! That gaunt crag
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!
World, World, I cannot hold thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,
But never knew I this—
Here such a passion is
As stretcheth me apart. Lord, I do fear
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year.
My soul is all but out of me—let fall
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

H. M.

Green Leaves, by Florence Ripley Mastin. James T. White & Co.

This book is a slight but delicate offering. A grave sincerity, and a technique simple, at its best, to the point of austerity, distinguish the revelation of penetrating, intimate feeling. The poet is not yet sure of herself or her method. One finds old-fashioned "poetic" artificialities—words like *lethèd*, *yea*, *perchance*, *give pause*, with *But oh* and *Quoth he* lines and over-wrought figures, especially in the latter half of the book. In the better poems, however, the emotion is carried without strain.

The first section, called *Indoors*, presents *The Teacher* and brief portraits of her grade-school pupils. Our readers will remember a few of the latter, especially the one of David, who failed, ending:

You will always fail—
You are too big to succeed
In the swift years before death.

From the *Outdoors* section a number of brief poems might be quoted if we had room—*A Manhattan Yard*, *Were One Wish Mine*, *Touch*, *A Girl's Thought*, or this, *The Reporter*:

In the March stillness
I heard a woodpecker—
Up the hill,
Near the blue painted sky.
He had captured all my news—
"Tap, tap," went his type-writer.

The third section, *Remembrance*, seems to come mostly from an earlier or poorer vintage. Ditto the fourth, a

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

group of war poems called *Bare Branches*, in most of which the poignant emotion of the moment gets poetized away.

On the whole, however, this is a promising first book.

H. M.

Etchings, by Robert Earl Barclay. Privately printed, Cambridge, Mass.

Here is a tiny book of tiny poems in free verse, poems which earn their title because they are well and simply drawn, without loose or straggling or unnecessary lines. The author is still under twenty—a boy-student in the U. S. N. Radio School of Harvard. But though he is in the war, his subjects are far from warlike; like the style they are of an extreme simplicity. So simple indeed are these little poems that it requires a second glance to discover that they have texture. The light shines through them and does not disdain to show their pattern, to reveal a certain quiet distinction of style. Here is one, for example, called *Spires*:

From the hill
I saw the spires of many churches;
But in the valley
I found them empty—
With here and there
A beggar
Resting on their porches.

One night, over a year ago, a young lad from Grand Rapids stalked over to see me through the snow, and read some promising but much too expansive poems. He had worked his way up from nothing in his native town—it was an exciting child-epic of studying and going to school while he earned money at paper-routing, lawn-mowing, any old

way, toiling and moiling all day long and half the night. And now he was working his way through the University of Chicago, and never for a moment doubting his goal.

Can there be any connection between that boy and this young radio-sailor-poet, between those poems so over-expansive and these so sharply drawn? H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE DAY OF VICTORY

The following letter to the editor seems such a vivid picture of the mood of city crowds on that wonderful Monday, the eleventh of November, that we risk the author's wrath by publishing it:

Oh, why can't I just cry in the streets! I am so small and impotent, and the emotion is so big—a great, suffocating sweetness!

There are millions of paper-doves fluttering down from the tremendously, hugely happy skyscrapers.

The sun is in a frenzy to stretch its rays—hot silver—a little further than on the usual days.

New York is born, New York is wedding her people. Here are flags for a marriage-dress, here are thousands of paper-doves for rice.

Soon the crowds will forget that they were all poets today. They will cover it with the pall of misery in their houses. But we shall be here to make them remember.

This day is pay-day,
This day is millennium.
Beauty shall never
Die into nothingness—
It is a joy forever!

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Down here you would not see one ugly face. They are all beautiful. They look at the children in the middle of the street, and laugh.

The people are all doing crazy things; they are all loving, loving, loving!

It's not drunkenness—it's not! Someone is crying—someone is crying. The misery is not forgotten but it is being requited, and those who cry are thanking God.

If I were not so mad, so insane with my happiness, with the sense of our tremendous power, I'd believe in God—now! E. C.

A WORD OF PROTEST

We are in receipt of the following explanation from one of the editors of *The Chicago Anthology*:

Dear Editors: Referring, for Mr. Blanden and myself, to your recent review of *The Chicago Anthology*, I would remind A. C. H. that her two poems contained in our book were selected from copies of POETRY furnished by H. M. in A. C. H.'s absence. Since the latter, in furnishing us similarly with her own poems, assured us they represented some of her best work, we inferred that the same judgment applied to those by A. C. H. It would seem unfortunate that the worst poem she ever wrote appeared in a magazine of which she was and is associate editor.

It has never been decided whether poets are trustworthy judges of their own work. However, practically all our selections were made, in the case of living writers, from poems submitted by the poets themselves as representing their best work. The greater or lesser significance of certain poems is, of course, also a matter of individual taste. If A. C. H. will name those "major poets" which she implies are unrepresented in our book, we shall be glad to hear of them. The unwillingness of Mr. Masters to be included was a matter of regret to us. The reasons given were simple and frankly commercial.

If Mr. Jones, in his introduction, adopts a semi-apologetic tone anent the "conservative principles of selection," he also defends H. M. against the charge of ultra-modernism in her conduct of POETRY. If the compilers of *The Chicago Anthology* confess that

A Word of Protest

to them the tares as yet outweigh the wheat in modernist verse, they need scarcely accept the stigma of old-fogeyism. That more rigid principles of selection were applied to the new forms than to the old we do not deny, but the chronological scope of our work explains this.

Minna Mathison

NOTES

Four of the poets in this number are well known to our readers: Agnes Lee (Mrs. Otto Freer), of Chicago, is the author of *The Border of the Lake*, *The Sharing* (Sherman French & Co.), and also of translations of French poetry.

Miss Helen Hoyt, now once more a resident of Chicago, has contributed to most of the special magazines, as well as others of more general circulation.

Miss Louise Driscoll, of Catskill, N. Y., has contributed to various magazines. Four years ago she received a prize from POETRY for her one-act tragedy, *Metal Checks*, adjudged the best poem received in competition for our War Number of Nov., 1914.

Miss Monroe, the editor of this magazine, is the author of *You and I* (Macmillan Co.) and *The Passing Show*, modern plays in verse (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

The two poets new to our readers are:

Mr. Arthur D. Rees, of Philadelphia, author of three poetic dramas—*Columbus*, *William Tell* and *Give us Your Gods* (J. B. Lippincott Co.). Mr. Rees, having been in recruiting service, has made free-verse paraphrases of the stories told by some of the men on applying for enlistment. The five poems we print are selections from these.

Mlle. Lysiane Bernhardt, a young French actress and poet, has been touring the country this year in the company of her distinguished and heroic aunt, Sara Bernhardt.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

The Heart of a Woman and Other Poems, by Georgia Douglas Johnson. Cornhill Co.

The Red Laugh, by Gervé Baronti. Cornhill Co.

The Modern Comedy and Other Poems, by O. R. Howard Thomson. Cornhill Co.

The Lover's Rosary, by Brookes More. Cornhill Co.

Light and Mist, by Katharine Adams. Cornhill Co.

Cornhuskers, by Carl Sandburg. Henry Holt & Co.

Echoes and Realities, by Walter Prichard Eaton. George H. Doran Co.

Gitanjali and Fruit-Gathering, by Sir Rabindranath Tagore; illustrated by Nandalal Bose, Surendranath Kar, Abanindranath Tagore and Nobenindranath Tagore. Macmillan Co.

Rediscoveries, by Richard D. Ware. Cornhill Co.

Gargoyles and Other Poems, by Howard Mumford Jones. Cornhill Co.

Songs of a Red Cross Nurse, by Brookes More. Cornhill Co.

Martial Lyrics—Poems on the War for Democracy, by Alfred Antoine Furman. S. L. Parsons & Co., Inc., New York.

The Heritage of Hope, by Edna Smith DeRan. Privately printed, Detroit.

The Vagabond and Other Poems from "Punch," by R. C. Lehmann. John Lane Co.

PLAY:

The Lost Pleiad, by Jane Dransfield. James T. White & Co.

PROSE:

The Letters of Anne Gilchrist and Walt Whitman, edited by Thomas B. Harned. Doubleday, Page & Co.

Formative Types in English Poetry, by George Herbert Palmer. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Verve: The Journal of Robert DeCamp Leland. The Poetry-Drama Co., Boston.

 Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. XIII

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THE ONLY JEALOUSY OF EMER

ENTER Musicians, with musical instruments. The First Musician pauses at the centre and stands with a cloth between his hands. The stage can be against the wall of any room.

First Musician [during the unfolding and folding of the cloth]:

A woman's beauty is like a white
Frail bird, like a white sea-bird alone
At daybreak after stormy night
Between two furrows upon the ploughed land:
A sudden storm and it was thrown
Between dark furrows upon the ploughed land.
How many centuries spent
The sedentary soul
In toils of measurement

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Beyond eagle or mole,
Beyond hearing or seeing,
Or Archimedes guess,
To raise into being
That loveliness?

A strange unserviceable thing,
A fragile, exquisite, pale shell,
That the vast troubled waters bring
To the loud sands before day has broken.
The storm arose and suddenly fell
Amid the dark before day had broken.
What death? what discipline?
What bonds no man could unbind
Being imagined within
The labyrinth of the mind?
What pursuing or fleeing?
What wounds, what bloody press?
Dragged into being
This loveliness.

[When the cloth is folded again the Musicians take their place against the wall. The folding of the cloth shows on one side of the stage the curtained bed or litter on which lies a man in his grave-clothes. He wears an heroic mask. Another man in the same clothes and mask crouches near the front. Emer is sitting beside the bed.]

First Musician [speaking]: I call before the eyes a roof
With cross-beams darkened by smoke.

William Butler Yeats

A fisher's net hangs from a beam,
A long oar lies against the wall.
I call up a poor fisher's house.
A man lies dead or swooning—
That amorous man,
That amorous, violent man, renowned Cuchulain—
Queen Emer at his side.
At her own bidding all the rest have gone.
But now one comes on hesitating feet,
Young Eithne Inguba, Cuchulain's mistress.
She stands a moment in the open door.
Beyond the open door the bitter sea,
The shining, bitter sea is crying out,
[singing] White shell, white wing,
I will not choose for my friend
A frail unserviceable thing
That drifts and dreams, and but knows
That waters are without end
And that wind blows.
Emer [speaking]: Come hither, come sit down beside the bed
You need not be afraid, for I myself
Sent for you, Eithne Inguba.
Eithne Inguba: No, Madam,
I have too deeply wronged you to sit there.
Emer: Of all the people in the world we two,
And we alone, may watch together here,
Because we have loved him best.
Eithne Inguba: And is he dead?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Emer: Although they have dressed him out in his grave-clothes

And stretched his limbs, Cuchulain is not dead.
The very heavens when that day's at hand,
So that his death may not lack ceremony,
Will throw out fires, and the earth grow red with blood.
There shall not be a scullion but foreknows it
Like the world's end.

Eithne Inguba: How did he come to this?

Emer: Towards noon in the assembly of the kings
He met with one who seemed a while most dear.
The kings stood round; some quarrel was blown up;
He drove him out and killed him on the shore
At Baile's tree. And he who was so killed
Was his own son begot on some wild woman
When he was young, or so I have heard it said.
And thereupon, knowing what man he had killed,
And being mad with sorrow, he ran out;
And after to his middle in the foam,
With shield before him and with sword in hand,
He fought the deathless sea. The kings looked on
And not a king dared stretch an arm, or even
Dared call his name, but all stood wondering
In that dumb stupor like cattle in a gale;
Until at last, as though he had fixed his eyes
On a new enemy, he waded out
Until the water had swept over him.
But the waves washed his senseless image up

And laid it at this door.

Eithne Inguba: How pale he looks!

Emer: He is not dead.

Eithne Inguba: You have not kissed his lips
Nor laid his head upon your breast.

Emer: It may be

An image has been put into his place,
A sea-born log bewitched into his likeness,
Or some stark horseman grown too old to ride
Among the troops of Mananan, Son of the Sea,
Now that his joints are stiff.

Eithne Inguba: Cry out his name.

All that are taken from our sight, they say,
Loiter amid the scenery of their lives
For certain hours or days; and should he hear
He might, being angry, drive the changeling out.

Emer: It is hard to make them hear amid their darkness,
And it is long since I could call him home;
I am but his wife, but if you cry aloud
With that sweet voice that is so dear to him
He cannot help but listen.

Eithne Inguba: He loves me best

Being his newest love, but in the end
Will love the woman best who loved him first
And loved him through the years when love seemed lost.

Emer: I have that hope, the hope that some day and some-
where

We'll sit together at the hearth again.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Eithne Inguba: Women like me when the violent hour is
over
Are flung into some corner like old nut-shells.
Cuchulain, listen.

Emer: No, not yet—for first
I'll cover up his face to hide the sea;
And throw new logs upon the hearth, and stir
The half burnt logs until they break in flame.
Old Mananan's unbridled horses come
Out of the sea, and on their backs his horsemen;
But all the enchantments of the dreaming foam
Dread the hearth fire.

[She pulls the curtains of the bed so as to hide the sick man's face, that the actor may change his mask unseen. She goes to one side of platform and moves her hand as though putting logs on a fire and stirring it into a blaze. While she makes these movements the Musicians play, marking the movements with drum and flute perhaps. Having finished, she stands beside the imaginary fire at a distance from Cuchulain and Eithne Inguba.]

Call on Cuchulain now.

Eithne Inguba: Can you not hear my voice?

Emer: Bend over him.

Call out dear secrets till you have touched his heart
If he lies there; and if he is not there
Till you have made him jealous.

Eithne Inguba: Cuchulain, listen.

Emer: You speak too timidly; to be afraid
Because his wife is but three paces off,
When there is so great a need, were but to prove
The man that chose you made but a poor choice.
We're but two women struggling with the sea.

Eithne Inguba: O my beloved, pardon me, that I
Have been ashamed and you in so great need.
I have never sent a message or called out,
Scarce had a longing for your company,
But you have known and come. And if indeed
You are lying there stretch out your arms and speak;
Open your mouth and speak, for to this hour
My company has made you talkative.
Why do you mope, and what has closed your ears?
Our passion had not chilled when we were parted
On the pale shore under the breaking dawn.
He will not hear me: or his ears are closed
And no sound reaches him.

Emer: Then kiss that image:
The pressure of your mouth upon his mouth
May reach him where he is.

Eithne Inguba [*starting back*]: It is no man.
I felt some evil thing that dried my heart
When my lips touched it.

Emer: No, his body stirs;
The pressure of your mouth has called him home;
He has thrown the changeling out.

Eithne Inguba [*going further off*]: Look at that arm—

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

That arm is withered to the very socket.

Emer [*going up to the bed*]:

What do you come for, and from where?

Figure of Cuchulain:

I have come

From Mananan's court upon a bridleless horse.

Emer: What one among the Sidhe has dared to lie

Upon Cuchulain's bed and take his image?

Figure of Cuchulain:

I am named Bricriu—not the man—that Bricriu,

Maker of discord among gods and men,

Called Bricriu of the Sidhe.

Emer:

Come for what purpose?

Figure of Cuchulain [*sitting up and showing its distorted face, while Eithne Inguba goes out*]:

I show my face and everything he loves

Must fly away.

Emer:

You people of the wind

Are full of lying speech and mockery.

I have not fled your face.

Figure of Cuchulain:

You are not loved.

Emer: And therefore have no dread to meet your eyes

And to demand him of you.

Figure of Cuchulain:

For that I have come.

You have but to pay the price and he is free.

Emer: Do the Sidhe bargain?

Figure of Cuchulain:

When they set free a captive

They take in ransom a less valued thing.

The fisher, when some knowledgeable man

William Butler Yeats

Restores to him his wife, or son, or daughter,
Knows he must lose a boat or net, or it may be
The cow that gives his children milk; and some
Have offered their own lives. I do not ask
Your life, or any valuable thing.
You spoke but now of the mere chance that some day
You'd sit together by the hearth again:
Renounce that chance, that miserable hour,
And he shall live again.

Emer: I do not question
But you have brought ill luck on all he loves;
And now, because I am thrown beyond your power
Unless your words are lies, you come to bargain.

Figure of Cuchulain: You loved your power when but
newly married,
And I love mine although I am old and withered.
You have but to put yourself into that power
And he shall live again.

Emer: No, never, never!

Figure of Cuchulain: You dare not be accursed, yet he has
dared.

Emer: I have but two joyous thoughts, two things I prize—
A hope, a memory; and now you claim that hope.

Figure of Cuchulain: He'll never sit beside you at the
hearth
Or make old bones, but die of wounds and toil
On some far shore or mountain, a strange woman
Beside his mattress.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Emer: You ask for my one hope

That you may bring your curse on all about him.

Figure of Cuchulain: You've watched his loves and you
have not been jealous

Knowing that he would tire, but do those tire

That love the Sidhe?

Emer: What dancer of the Sidhe,

What creature of the reeling moon has pursued him?

Figure of Cuchulain: I have but to touch your eyes and
give them sight;

But stand at my left side.

[*He touches her eyes with his left hand, the right being
withered.*]

Emer: My husband there.

Figure of Cuchulain: But out of reach—I have dissolved
the dark.

That hid him from your eyes, but not that other

That's hidden you from his.

Emer: Husband, husband!

Figure of Cuchulain: Be silent, he is but a phantom now,
And he can neither touch, nor hear, nor see.

The longing and the cries have drawn him hither.

He heard no sound, heard no articulate sound;

They could but banish rest, and make him dream,

And in that dream, as do all dreaming shades

Before they are accustomed to their freedom,

He has taken his familiar form, and yet

He crouches there not knowing where he is
Or at whose side he is crouched.

[*A Woman of the Sidhe has entered, and stands a little
inside the door.*]

Emer: Who is this woman?

Figure of Cuchulain: She has hurried from the Country-
Under-Wave,

And dreamed herself into that shape that he
May glitter in her basket; for the Sidhe
Are fishers also and they fish for men
With dreams upon the hook.

Emer: And so that woman
Has hid herself in this disguise and made
Herself into a lie.

Figure of Cuchulain: A dream is body;
The dead move ever towards a dreamless youth
And when they dream no more return no more;
And those more holy shades that never lived
But visit you in dreams.

Emer: I know her sort.
They find our men asleep, weary with war,
Or weary with the chase, and kiss their lips
And drop their hair upon them. From that hour
Our men, who yet knew nothing of it all,
Are lonely, and when at fall of night we press
Their hearts upon our hearts their hearts are cold.

[*She draws a knife from her girdle.*]

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Figure of Cuchulain: And so you think to wound her with
a knife.

She has an airy body. Look and listen—

I have not given you eyes and ears for nothing.

[*The Woman of the Sidhe moves round the crouching Ghost of Cuchulain at front of stage in a dance that grows gradually quicker, as he slowly awakes. At moments she may drop her hair upon his head, but she does not kiss him. She is accompanied by string and flute and drum. Her mask and clothes must suggest gold or bronze or brass or silver, so that she seems more an idol than a human being. This suggestion may be repeated in her movements. Her hair too must keep the metallic suggestion.*]

Ghost of Cuchulain: Who is it stands before me there,
Shedding such light from limb and hair
As when the moon, complete at last
With every laboring crescent past,
And lonely with extreme delight,
Flings out upon the fifteenth night?

Woman of the Sidhe: Because I long I am not complete.
What pulled your hands about your feet,
And your head down upon your knees,
And hid your face?

Ghost of Cuchulain: Old memories:
A dying boy, with handsome face
Upturned upon a beaten place;
A sacred yew-tree on a strand;

A woman that held in steady hand
In all the happiness of her youth
Before her man had broken troth,
A burning wisp to light the door;
And many a round or crescent more;
Dead men and women. Memories
Have pulled my head upon my knees.

Woman of the Sidhe: Could you that have loved many a
woman

That did not reach beyond the human,
Lacking a day to be complete,
Love one that, though her heart can beat,
Lacks it but by an hour or so?

Ghost of Cuchulain: I know you now, for long ago
I met you on the mountain side,
Beside a well that seemed long dry,
Beside old thorns where the hawk flew.
I held out arms and hands, but you,
That now seem friendly, fled away
Half woman and half bird of prey.

Woman of the Sidhe: Hold out your arms and hands again.
You were not so dumbfounded when
I was that bird of prey, and yet
I am all woman now.

Ghost of Cuchulain: I am not
The young and passionate man I was,
And though that brilliant light surpass
All crescent forms, my memories

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Weigh down my hands, abash my eyes.
Woman of the Sidhe: Then kiss my mouth. Though
memory

Be beauty's bitterest enemy
I have no dread, for at my kiss
Memory on the moment vanishes:
Nothing but beauty can remain.

Ghost of Cuchulain: And shall I never know again
Intricacies of blind remorse?

Woman of the Sidhe: Time shall seem to stay his course,
For when your mouth and my mouth meet
All my round shall be complete
Imagining all its circles run;
And there shall be oblivion
Even to quench Cuchulain's drouth,
Even to still that heart.

Ghost of Cuchulain: Your mouth.
[*They are about to kiss, he turns away.*]
O Emer, Emer!

Woman of the Sidhe: So then it is she
Made you impure with memory.

Ghost of Cuchulain: Still in that dream I see you stand,
A burning wisp in your right hand,
To wait my coming to the house—
As when our parents married us.

Woman of the Sidhe: Being among the dead you love her,
That valued every slut above her
While you still lived.

Ghost of Cuchulain: O my lost Emer!

Woman of the Sidhe: And there is not a loose-tongued
schemer

But could draw you if not dead,
From her table and her bed.
How could you be fit to wive
With flesh and blood, being born to live
Where no one speaks of broken troth—
For all have washed out of their eyes
Wind-blown dirt of their memories
To improve their sight?

Ghost of Cuchulain: Your mouth, your mouth.

[*Their lips approach but Cuchulain turns away as Emer speaks.*]

Emer: If he may live I am content,
Content that he shall turn on me—
If but the dead will set him free
That I may speak with him at whiles—
Eyes that the cold moon or the harsh sea
Or what I know not's made indifferent.

Ghost of Cuchulain: What a wise silence has fallen in this
dark!

I know you now in all your ignorance
Of all whereby a lover's quiet is rent.
What dread so great as that he should forget
The least chance sight or sound, or scratch or mark
On an old door, or frail bird heard and seen
In the incredible clear light love cast

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

All round about her some forlorn lost day?
That face, though fine enough, is a fool's face
And there's a folly in the deathless Sidhe
Beyond man's reach.

Woman of the Sidhe: I told you to forget
After my fashion; you would have none of it;
So now you may forget in a man's fashion.
There's an unbridled horse at the sea's edge.
Mount—it will carry you in an eye's wink
To where the King of Country-Under-wave,
Old Mananan, nods above the board and moves
His chessmen in a dream. Demand your life,
And come again on the unbridled horse.

Ghost of Cuchulain: Forgive me those rough words. How
could you know
That man is held to those whom he has loved
By pain they gave, or pain that he has given—
Intricacies of pain.

Woman of the Sidhe: I am ashamed
That being of the deathless shades I chose
A man so knotted to impurity.

[*The Ghost of Cuchulain goes out.*]

Woman of the Sidhe [*to figure of Cuchulain*]: To you that
have no living light, but dropped
From a last leprous crescent of the moon
I owe it all.

Figure of Cuchulain: Because you have failed
I must forego your thanks, I that took pity

Upon your love and carried out your plan
To tangle all his life and make it nothing
That he might turn to you.

Woman of the Sidhe: Was it from pity

You taught the woman to prevail against me?

Figure of Cuchulain: You know my nature—by what
name I am called.

Woman of the Sidhe: Was it from pity that you hid the
truth

That men are bound to women by the wrongs

They do or suffer?

Figure of Cuchulain: You know what being I am.

Woman of the Sidhe: I have been mocked and disobeyed—
your power

Was more to you than my good-will, and now

I'll have you learn what my ill-will can do:

I lay you under bonds upon the instant

To stand before our King and face the charge

And take the punishment.

Figure of Cuchulain: I'll stand there first,

And tell my story first; and Mananan

Knows that his own harsh sea made my heart cold.

Woman of the Sidhe: My horse is there and shall outrun
your horse.

[*The Figure of Cuchulain falls back, the Woman of the
Sidhe goes out. Drum taps, music resembling horse hoofs.*]

Eithne Inguba [*entering quickly*]: I heard the beat of hoofs,
but saw no horse;

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

And then came other hoofs, and after that
I heard low angry cries, and thereupon
I ceased to be afraid.

Emer: Cuchulain wakes.

[*The figure turns round. It once more wears the heroic mask.*]

Cuchulain: Eithne Inguba, take me in your arms—
I have been in some strange place and am afraid.

[*The First Musician comes to the front of the stage, the others from each side. They unfold the cloth, singing.*]

The Musicians:

What makes her heart beat thus,
Plain to be understood?
I have met in a man's house
A statue of solitude,
Moving there and walking;
Its strange heart beating fast
For all our talking.
Oh, still that heart at last!

O bitter reward!
Of many a tragic tomb!
And we though astonished are dumb
And give but a sigh and a word,
A passing word.

Although the door be shut
And all seem well enough,

William Butler Yeats

Although wide world hold not
A man but will give you his love
The moment he has looked at you,
He that has loved the best
May turn from a statue
His too human breast.

O bitter reward!
Of many a tragic tomb!
And we though astonished are dumb
Or give but a sigh and a word,
A passing word.

What makes your heart so beat?
Some one should stay at her side.
When beauty is complete
Her own thought will have died
And danger not be diminished;
Dimmed at three-quarter light,
When moon's round is finished
The stars are out of sight.

O bitter reward!
Of many a tragic tomb!
And we though astonished are dumb
Or give but a sigh and a word,
A passing word.

[When the cloth is folded again the stage is bare.]

William Butler Yeats

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

RED EARTH

MUY VIEJA MEXICANA

I've seen her pass with eyes upon the road—
An old bent woman in a bronze black shawl,
With skin as dried and wrinkled as a mummy's,
As brown as a cigar-box, and her voice
Like the low vibrant strings of a guitar.
And I have fancied from the girls about
What she was at their age, what they will be
When they are old as she. But now she sits
And smokes away each night till dawn comes round,
Thinking, beside the piñons' flame, of days
Long past and gone, when she was young—content
To be no longer young, her epic done:

For a woman has work and much to do,
And it's good at the last to know it's through,
And still have time to sit alone,
To have some time you can call your own.
It's good at the last to know your mind
And travel the paths that you traveled blind,
To see each turn and even make
Trips in the byways you did not take—
But that, *por Dios*, is over and done,
It's pleasanter now in the way we've come;
It's good to smoke and none to say
What's to be done on the coming day,

No mouths to feed or coat to mend,
And none to call till the last long end.
Though one have sons and friends of one's own,
It's better at last to live alone.
For a man must think of food to buy,
And a woman's thoughts may be wild and high;
But when she is young she must curb her pride,
And her heart is tamed for the child at her side.
But when she is old her thoughts may go
Wherever they will, and none to know.
And night is the time to think and dream,
And not to get up with the dawn's first gleam;
Night is the time to laugh or weep,
And when dawn comes it is time to sleep . . .

When it's all over and there's none to care,
I mean to be like her and take my share
Of comfort when the long day's done,
And smoke away the nights, and see the sun
Far off, a shrivelled orange in a sky gone black,
Through eyes that open inward and look back.

ON THE ACEQUIA MADRE

Death has come to visit us today,
He is such a distinguished visitor
Everyone is overcome by his presence—
"Will you not sit down—take a chair?"

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

But Death stands in the doorway, waiting to depart;
He lingers like a breath in the curtains.
The whole neighborhood comes to do him honor,
Women in black shawls and men in black sombreros
Sitting motionless against white-washed walls;
And the old man with the grey stubby beard
To whom death came,
Is stunned into silence.
Death is such a distinguished visitor,
Making even old flesh important.

But who now, I wonder, will take the old horse to pasture?

EL RITO DE SANTE FE

This valley is not ours, nor these mountains,
Nor the names we give them—they belong,
They, and this sweep of sun-washed air,
Desert and hill and crumbling earth,
To those who have lain here long years
And felt the soak of the sun
Through the red sand and crumbling rock,
Till even their bones were part of the sun-steeped valley;
How many years we know not, nor what names
They gave to antelope, wolf, or bison,
To prairie dog or coyote,
To this hill where we stand,
Or the moon over your shoulder . . .

Let us build a monument to Time
That knows all, sees all, and contains all,
To whom these bones in the valley are even as we are:
Even Time's monument would crumble
Before the face of Time,
And be as these white bones
Washed clean and bare by the sun. . . .

CANDLE-LIGHT AND SUN

CANDLE-LIGHT

It might have been me in the darkened room
With the shutters closed,
Lying straight and slim
In the shuttered dusk,
In the twilight dim;
Like a silken husk
When the corn is gone,
Life withdrawn.
I am living, and she is dead—
It might have been me instead.

THE MASK

Death is a beautiful white mask,
That slips over the face, when the moment comes,
To hide the happiness of the soul.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

RAIN-PRAYER

A broken ploughed field
In the driving rain,
Rain driven slant-wise
Over the plain.
I long for the rain,
The dull long rain,
For farmlands and ploughlands
And cornlands again.
O grey broken skies,
You were part of my pain!

FAME

Fame is an echo
Far off, remote—
But love is a sweetness
You taste in the throat,
Friendship a comfort
When twilight falls.
But fame is an echo
Through empty halls.

SONG OF SUNLIGHT

Sunlight is in my eyes,
Every house edged with light;
Open fields are before me,
Mountains across the sky.

Alice Corbin

What have I to do with cities?

Here the gods are clean, wind-swept.
They run along the hills,
Mad with sunlight;
They tumble into a deep canyon;
They take hold of a cloud
And swing with it—listen!—
They drop far off, noiselessly,
Beyond the blue mountain.

At night they lie down under the moon.
Do you see that hill move—
Heavily, like a sleeper,
Wrinkling his skin,
Moving the contour of pines and rocks,
Resting his hips?

It is not far to the stars,
Not far for them to lean down and whisper . . .

Sunlight, I am mad with your light.
Rocks, I have never known you before.
Earth, your red canyons
Are sluiced through me,
The crests of your hills
Break over me—
I ride upward to meet them.

Alice Corbin

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

PICTURES OF WOMEN

AN OLD WOMAN WITH FLOWERS

I like to see the eager-faced old woman
Walking at sunset down the city street.
Always she holds against her heart with fervor
Her sprays of meadow-sweet.

She passes daily, and I never see her
Without the flowers she gathers to her so.
I do not know how destiny softens, hardens
The ways her feet must go,

Nor what her eyes forever are beholding
Beyond the sordid walls and grimy towers,
Nor what against her aged heart she presses,
Pressing the meadow flowers.

THE SLACKER

The snow is lying very deep.
My house is sheltered from the blast.
I hear each muffled step outside,
I hear each voice go past.

But I'll not venture in the drift
Out of this bright security,
Till enough footsteps come and go
To make a path for me.

THE BROKEN TIE

How the wind blew,
And the snow threw
Its ermine softness at my window-pane!
Now I am there again,
In the old house as once on a winter night.
About the rooms I stray,
A stranger, yet at home forevermore.
A creak of the floor—
Why, here comes Rosalie,
Here's Gordon tiptoeing to me,
Holding his candle high.
Children, children, I have come back—yes, I!

What has become of the house I have forsworn?
What other forms are they,
Bringing new garnishment to nook and hall?
I see them not at all,
As here I sit, a mother miles away,
And roam the rooms and roam the rooms till morn.

BARK-BOUND

In her home a woman I know
Is a bark-bound tree;
The flowers bloom at her feet,
But she does not see.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The knife has glittered by
To the forest to prune,
And left her deaf to the wind
And blind to the moon.

She must live on her sap
In her ease and dark,
Until she shrivels and dies
In her walls of bark.

Unless the glittering knife
Should return her way,
And set its steel to the bark
And let in day.

IN THE MORGUE

She who walked with flaming dress
And the gems of idleness,

She who counted in her troop
Young man Dream and old man Dupe,

Comes at last to lay her head
Here among the unclaimed dead.

She was weary as the sages
With the riddle of the ages,

Agnes Lee

Saying to midnight: "Whether or no,
Half the world is builded so;"

Saying to morn: "Come do your mocking!—
But there's money in my stocking!"

Now, with strong, insistent voice
Calling, urging to the choice,

More than gems or loves that were,
The stern sea has tempted her.

THE SWEEPER

Frail, wistful guardian of the broom,
The dwelling's drudge and stay,
Whom destiny gave a single task—
To keep the dust away!

Sweep off the floor and polish the chair.
It will not always last.
Some day, for all your arms can do,
The dust will hold you fast.

Agnes Lee

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE OLD WOMAN

A Morality Play in Two Parts

I

Doctor: There is an old woman
 Who ought to die—

Deacon: And nobody knows
 But what she's dead—

Doctor: The air will be cleaner
 When she's gone—

Deacon: But we dare not bury her
 Till she's dead—

Landlady: Come, young doctor
 From the first floor front,
 Come, dusty deacon
 From the fourth floor back—
 You take her heels
 And I'll take her head—

Doctor and We'll carry her

Deacon: And bury her—
 If she's dead!

House: They roll her up
 In her old red quilt,
 They carry her down

At a horizontal tilt.
She doesn't say, "Yes!"
And she doesn't say, "No!"
She doesn't say, "Gentlemen,
Where do we go?"

Doctor: Out in the lot
Where the ash-cans die,
There, old woman,
There shall you lie!

Deacon: Let's hurry away,
And never look behind
To see if her eyes
Are dead and blind,
To see if the quilt
Lies over her face.
Perhaps she'll groan,
Or move in her place!

House: The room is empty
Where the old woman lay,
And I no longer
Smell like a tomb—

Landlady: Doctor, deacon,
Can you say
Who'll pay the rent
For the old woman's room?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

II

House: The room is empty
 Down the hall;
 There are mice in the closet,
 Ghosts in the wall.
 A pretty little lady
 Comes to see—

Woman: Oh, what a dark room!
 Not for me!

Landlady: The room is large
 And the rent is low;
 There's a deacon above,
 And a doctor below—

Deacon: When the little mice squeak
 I will pray—

Doctor: I'll psycho-analyze
 The ghosts away—

Landlady: The bed is large
 And the mattress deep;
 Wrapped in a featherbed
 You shall sleep—

Woman: But here's the door
 Without a key—

An unlocked room
Won't do for me!

Doctor: Here's a bolt—

Deacon: And here's a bar —

Landlady: You'll sleep safely
Where you are!

Woman: Good-night, gentlemen,
It's growing late.
Good-night, landlady,
Pray don't wait!
I'm going to bed—
I'll bolt the door
And sleep more soundly
Than ever before!

Deacon: Good-night, madam,
I'll steal away—

Doctor: Glad a pretty lady
Has come to stay!

House: She lights a candle—
What do I see?
That cloak looks like
A quilt to me!
She climbs into bed
Where long she's lain;

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

She's come back home—
She won't leave again.
She's found once more
Her rightful place—
Same old lady
With a pretty new face.
Let the deacon pray
And the doctor talk—
The mice will squeak
And the ghosts will walk.
There's a crafty smile
On the landlady's face—
The old woman's gone
And she's filled her place!

Landlady: It's nothing to me
If the old woman's dead—
I've somebody sleeping
In every bed!

Marjorie Allen Seiffert

COMMENT

FIVE YEARS OF ITALIAN POETRY (1910-1915)

CARDUCCI and Pascoli are dead, and D'Annunzio has reached the appreciation of fat American reviews. This article is about a few young poets who were acknowledged in, and contributed to, the magazine *La Voce* and the futurists' organ *Lacerba*. As for the rest, let me right here mention, and rid me of, the Mackaye type and the Woodberry type of poet. They are many in Italy—imitators of D'Annunzio or Carducci, over-visioned, over-inspired, overwhelming saviours-of-the-world or sons-of-the-Muses; and the most popular of them is Sem Benelli, known to the French and American public for his dramatic poems.

Now I should speak of characteristics, schools and tendencies; but I am thinking of Verlaine, Laforgue, Browning, Verhaeren, and of how they stood out and above all schools, and of how puzzled a critic would be who should want to pigeon-hole them. The first good poem that was ever written started the school of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare; and in so far as a poet succeeds in writing poetry, he belongs to that school and no other.

Here, then, are a few names:

Palazzeschi: Simplicity and naiveté of a modern St. Francis of Assisi. Wonder-eyed playboy, swift and light artist.

Papini: "At twenty, each idea is to be suspected, each man is the enemy;" having suffered our own great way, we have

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

our own great remedies to suggest. But after, most of us shrink, become humbler—out of some defeat perhaps. Papini has fulfilled the desire of his heart of twenty—he has not shrunk. More than a warrior or a martyr has Papini given his life to his country, his people; in tempestuous autobiographical complaints, articles—criticism and pragmatism. Get the suggestion, in these titles, of articles which are Papini's best poems: *Give us Today our Daily Poetry*; *The Two Literary Traditions* (Dante, Petrarca); *To Become Geniuses*.

Slataper: Died, very young, in the war. Wrote of the Carso mountains, the sheer, hard landscapes where he lived—a big, hard and clean boy.

Govoni: The writer of the most musical, most humane free verse I have read. Delicate as a girl, if at times he sings the luridist, obscenest facts in the life of an old Italian city, he does so with the same delicate voice. Something of Frost in him—or, I should rather say, something of Govoni in Frost.

Di Giacomo: Writes in Neapolitan dialect short stories and poems of the irremediable sadness and the irrational tragedy of the old Naples. With a tenderness that is real in Italy because of the climate, etc.; and would be sentimentality in America. He has been acknowledged by Croce and is considered to be the national poet.

Jahier: "Man of many scruples," believing that a poet is any man bothered by a great conscience. Works in an office for a living. No language and no grammar fits Jahier;

Five Years of Italian Poetry

and they must widen and become more hospitable in order to accept him. Jahier knows that it is the poet who shapes languages and grammars, and accomplishes many other things.

Soffici: Most advanced of them all, fights his way through French influences to a broken jagged sort of poetry (words at liberty, and lyric simultaneities) which is as haphazard as life itself.

And then Clemente Rebora, very earnest and very rich, who overflows into an imagism that is an orgy of cold senses, and dwindles into a unanimism that is emotional vagueness. Also Umberto Saba, Luciano Folgore and Camillo Sbarbaro, poets with too definite an attitude—that is, too narrow—sometimes borrowed.

Palazzeschi, Govoni and Papini were of the futuristic movement for a time; and more consistently than they, so was Soffici, who is well known as a painter.

When a heavy mood of mine crushes the appreciative attitude that I like to maintain, I see the flaws of Italian poetry as all being liable to definition under one name—Futurism. Futurism was built upon the mistakes, exaggerations and aberrations of some of the poets I have mentioned. It was born of the need for fellowship among those poets, and, with Marinetti, of the need for notoriety; and was fostered by the hustling of many vacant souls, who made out of these exaggerations, etc. (which were all they could reach), a theory and a way of art. The movement, being largely a furious reaction, was largely a merely negative manifestation. The attitude was: Since the *Passatisti* were obvious, we

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

will be obscure. Since they were grandiloquent with faith, we will struggle from irony to despair and backward. Since with them sexual matters were more or less fig-leaved, we will trace the minutes and the seconds of our sexual sophistication. Since they were too definite, rough-drawn, soared too high astride voluminous Pegasuses blown by the wind of universal moods, we will herald the unimportance of art; we will trace the formation of the mood, but be careful to evade the mood itself; write elements of proto-psychology (and Mallarmé started it). Above all let's hate the bourgeois.

The trouble with them was, as Prezzolini put it, that they were bourgeois themselves. Vicious circles of weariness and sensualism, disease and cynicism—aren't these very bourgeois? Squalor of unemployed senses, where literature becomes an obsession; wantlessness—as with Ezra Pound, who spends too many pages of his *Lustra* worrying whither and wherefore and when and how his songs go (Do they go?); well, snobs and freaks and business men are also always occupied with disoccupations of the sort. All the vicious circles, all the insanities, all the decadences, are of the world that the artist hates. But he hates it because he suffers at seeing it thus; he does not resolve upon hating while still he is in it and lives no better than anybody else—this the bourgeois does and the futurist also. And as to obscurity: faces turn sour, stale, lurid, twisted, and are eaten up from inside; in the street today every face is heart-rending—because people do not understand, they do not see and cannot talk. And to whoever would preach obscurity: out, out

Five Years of Italian Poetry

in the open, to be simplified by the clean weather! out in the open and less in the rooms, for the sake of health!

And then, of course, their theories being absurd, these writers betray their theories. Marinetti is more grandiloquent, more obvious, and writes noisier classical bombast than any cheap *passatista*. That's why they hear him around the world. But Prezzolini, lovable critic, full of strength and cleanness, has fixed him and his gang, in the only intelligent articles on futurism that have appeared in Italian magazines, where pigheaded professors have waged war against it, and nasty ignorant youths have defended it.

After all this, I see in these five years of Italian poetry something that I want to call modern. And if participation in futurism of the best poets of Italy has any good significance at all, it means that it was the effect of a consciousness of modernity in those poets. Whether there is or is not anything new under the sun, things which must (if you will) be repeated are said in a line, whereas in olden times they required a whole strophe. Modern man, grown into a consciousness that science and the experience of dead artists have given him, sees a more intricate and nearer, even if apparently smaller, world than the large one of the old artists; and I think it is Yeats who says that no traditional pose is adequate to express it. Here, a friend suggests that a kind of sophistication recurs more than once through the ages, with the suavity of old civilizations. Though I advance my view humbly and would defend it from attack by saying that it is mainly pragmatic, I am thinking that my friend's

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

observation rather confirms it than confutes it. Let this be food for speculation for those whose opinion that there is nothing new under the sun is also pragmatic, and I agree to drop the subject.

I want, finally, to point out the simple way of expression of Palazzeschi, Govoni and Jahier; which suggests to me that the only school is that of simplicity. It has been said that making poetry is the process wherewith one frees the thing seen of all that is not artistic—the unnecessary, the commonplace, the grandiloquent and the poetical. And I should dare to say that simplicity is then also the quality of being true, which means human, which means beautiful.

And I realize here that I owe an apology to Ezra Pound.

Emanuel Carnevali

CORRADO GOVONI

HAPPINESS

I don't know why,
but I'm happy this morning.
Is it that I heard through the streets of the village
the voice of the letter-carrier?
Opening the green window, have I
felt that the little swallows were born?
Have I seen the empty shells over the side-walk?
Have I listened to the little hog
grunting against the door of the pig-sty
with joy, hearing my mother
who was crossing the yard
with a pail of warm slop
calling him like a child?
Have I seen the wife of the cowherd
take out from the oven
rosy crosses of bread?

Five Years of Italian Poetry

or the white oxen
coming back from the fields
with the red cart crammed full of grass?
or the peddler
in the yard
weighing out to an old farmer
cherries into his trembling scale?
Has the knife-grinder come
With his damp castle?

I am happy,
perhaps because there far away
the cuckoo—
this grey gull
of the dark-green sea of hemp—
asks himself questions and answers them;
because the spikes of the ripe wheat
are like blond tiny braids.

SALVATORE DI GIACOMO

OLD-FASHIONED DITTY

Listen. . . . if you see him,
that crook of Gennarino,
tell him he is a murderer!
No. . . . don't tell him that!
Tell him. . . . yes, yes, tell him
that he is a beast, a snake,
and always has been that.
No. . . . wait. . . . don't tell him that!

And if you'd tell him, "Rose
would have her fling, she too;
but then. . . . she. . . . herself. . . .
would want to know if you. . . ."?

No. . . . tell him that I'm crying. . . .
tell him I'm burning. . . . see. . . .
tell him I'm dying, dying. . . .
But bring him here to me.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

PIERO JAHIER

RESERVISTS

I admit it has been an insult, miss.

I know how things went: you had answered with enthusiasm—you had—to the call of your country. . . . Your tight waist was new, in it you looked really like Italy over the buildings of the exposition. And you didn't carry poison in your basket, but oranges, which are already so dear this season that maybe no reservist has tasted of them anymore—now that they're so refreshing and juicy, but dear in this time of the year; and tempting cigarettes, smoke for gentlemen!

It's an insult to refuse so much courtesy!

That terrible 127! he shall be forever dishonored among the young ladies who distribute in oranges the gratitude of the fatherland in the stations.

It's an insult and that's all!

But let it be, now; I forbid you to explain, "These men have no fatherland," because one has cried: "Down with the war!" which is not "Down with the fatherland!"

You too cried: "Hurrah for the war!" which is not yet "Hurrah for the fatherland!"

It's an insult—that's right—to throw the orange after you, miss.

It's lack of education—that's all, but that's enough; don't go any further to the heart of education; because I too then am forced to appeal to the heart.

And I tell you: go along with the young men.

You see this was a reservist, miss, and under the uniform a man of sorrows.

Queer moment, this sorrow! that one can't even eat oranges and smoke cigarettes offered by young ladies!

To go to war—in spite of all the flags it was grave and serious to him, like going to die.

Because he wasn't young any more; he was a reservist—not young—aged. Ah! the young fellows, that's different! They can live with death near; they are strong; and maybe they are going to be happy—it's worth while to risk: you too—a pill of sublimate among mad blond curls if love betrays!

Five Years of Italian Poetry

But he was a reservist. Aged. Many things are already irremediable.

The will has its limits.

To go to war was serious and grave to him, like going to die.

Go along with the young men next time, miss.

And possibly, students.

For they are your companions, and they are not impressed by the fine odor of flesh, O young lady forbidden to the man of the people.

Go with the students, and you won't need to mortify them looking at them as they look at a watch-dog, young ladies!

He wasn't a student. He was an aged reservist, sad in the moment of going away.

A strange moment, the departure: one may realize that life has been all a mistake.

If you knew how life is—for others than young ladies!—temptations, weaknesses, saloons; the children sometimes forgotten; and that little woman sneered at because she went to church—and sometimes even beaten up; a little woman who remains with 0.75 and two kids—she and the kids.

And they are over the bridge because they would not let them pass.

Then, for a compensation, you come, the most beautiful of your class-room, with your orange in your hand and your patronizing look.

Ah! if he just threw it at you—now I won't admit that it was an insult, miss.

ALDO PALAZZESCHI

INDIFFERENT

I am your father.

Is that so?

I am your mother.

Is that so?

This is your brother.

Is that so?

That is your sister.

Is that so?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE TWO ROSES

Poor soldier,
who press strong against your temples
the white rose of the pillow
to still the ardor
of that hidden red one
that makes you burn,
poor soldier,
who hurt you?

UMBERTO SABA

THE PIG

(Extract—last lines)

But if, while looking, I put myself in his place,
I feel down in his flesh the pain of the knife,
hear that scream, that fearful quarrel
while to the group a dog bays
and from the threshold laughs the housewife. . . .

SCIPIO SLATAPER

FROM MY CARSO—A LYRIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I love the rain heavy and violent. . . .
It comes down tearing off the weak leaves. . . .

The water is good and fresh. It invades everything. If you put
your finger in the ground around the trunks you feel how the
roots suck it. All the lives in pain breathe freely.
For the earth has a thousand pains. On every creature a stone
weighs, or a torn branch, or a bigger leaf, or the fine dirt a
mole has left, or the step of some animal. All the trunks have
a scar or a wound.

The Carso is a country of stone and junipers. A terrible cry in
stone.

Five Years of Italian Poetry

But if a word shall be born of you—kiss the wild thymes that
squeeze their life from the rock! Here is stone and death.
But when a gentian attains to lift her head and bloom, in her
all the deep sky of spring is gathered.
Press your mouth against the ground and do not speak!

.

The night; the waning stars; the warm sun; the evening tremor
of branches; the night; I walk.
God said: let even Sorrow have its peace.
God said: let even Sorrow have its silence. Let even man have
his solitude.
Carso, my fatherland, I bless you.

REVIEWS

GREAT POETRY

On Heaven and Poems Written on Active Service, by
Ford Madox Hueffer. John Lane Co.

Has England any up-to-date, twentieth-century poet of large calibre? Has she given us any poetry of war true to the motive of *this* war and the spirit of these times, and unlit by the rose-and-purple glint of ancient glammers, of time-exaggerated ideals? Has any of her poets expressed *our* kind of spirituality, the hope and faith and power that carry *us* through *our* days of agony, and bring us *our* flashes of joy?

Yes—this book is the proof of it. A man-size book by a poet who does not shirk the bitterest issues of life and death, and who admits no rose-color of romance between his eyes and the white light of truth; by a poet moreover whose molding of English words into a form fit and shapely and abso-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

lutely expressive, has become, after long practice and experiment, as sure as a master potter's molding of clay.

Going through this small volume with a favoring pencil, one finds oneself noting *all* the poems and getting a fresh delight, a fresh illumination, from each. The light shines through them as through prismatic glass, separating into its pure and vivid color-elements. The book has the effect of justifying our modern spirituality—our twentieth-century ideals which have fought and won the greatest of all wars; as against the fragmentary visions, the ecstatic closet-divinations, which fought and won those lesser wars of the past—wars temporal and spiritual that passed the torch along through the centuries. Not that there is any remotest hint of propaganda, any trace of the pulpit or the rostrum: the poet never states, he never directly tells us anything. But through the depth and clarity of his own emotion he makes us feel what he feels; and what he feels, what his illumined mind knows, is simply the whole immense range and beauty of the modern science-illumined search for truth.

One is tempted to compare, or contrast, this soldier-poet—for even *On Heaven*, printed by POETRY in June, 1914, reads like a soldier's poem—with that other English soldier-poet, Rupert Brooke. Brooke was moved by all the old romantic glammers: he sang the glory of war, the rapture of death in battle; and, true to type, completed the image by dying in beautiful youth, in inviolate faith. Hueffer is moved by sterner forces; unaided by illusion, he can yet follow his country's flag and the world's hope through four long years

of agony, knowing always the criminal absurdity of war, yet always completing the paradox with a deep realization of war's sublimities of devotion and sacrifice. As Brooke's glamorous death was typical, so is it typical that the more modern poet has lived through the four arduous years of battle to face the new struggle for the remaking of the world. And if Brooke's shining muse wore classic draperies, Hueffer makes no apologies for naked beauty in such poems as *One Day's List*, *Clair de Lune*, *The Old Houses of Flanders*, or *Footsloggers*, which begins and ends with this strophe:

What is love of one's land?

Ah, we know very well

It is something that sleeps for a year, for a day,

For a month, something that keeps

Very hidden and quiet and still,

And then takes

The quiet heart like a wave,

The quiet brain like a spell,

The quiet will

Like a tornado, and that shakes

The whole being and soul

Aye, the whole of the soul.

Perhaps the whole contrast—the difference between the old and the new—is suggested in *When the World Crumbled*:

Once there were purple seas—

Wide, wide

And myrtle-groves and cyclamen,

Above the cliff and the stone pines

Where a god watched.

And thou, O Lesbian

Well, *that's* all done!

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The two longer poems, which open and close the book, are *Antwerp* and *On Heaven*. Both are written in a rhymed conversational free verse, the rhymes ringing those little bells of surprise which present-day technique aims at rather than the exactly measured chime of the more accepted forms. Mr. Hueffer's *Collected Works* show how expert he has been in the manipulation of the usual measures, but he has graduated into the freer form because—let him tell us:

It is because I simply can't help it. *Vers libre* is the only medium in which I can convey any more intimate moods. *Vers libre* is a very jolly medium in which to write and to read, if it be read conversationally and quietly. And anyhow, symmetrical or rhymed verse is for me a cramped and difficult medium—or an easy and uninteresting one.

In the opinion of at least one reader, Mr. Hueffer's poetry in this medium is as much more beautiful than his earlier work as it is more simple and "intimate." The extreme skill which has gone into the making of these poems is most happily concealed under the easy distinction and clarity of an achieved style. The poet complains of "sloppiness" in *On Heaven*; indeed for four years he refused to reprint it, leaving to POETRY the honor of exclusive publication; and even now the earlier version contains a beautiful passage of thirty lines super-critically omitted from the book. But while the style has not that hardness which the imagists aim at, being more fluent and less patterned than their discreet counsel admits as the latest vogue, it has a silken richness shining and flowing with many colors in the wind, and absolutely responsive in texture and movement to the delicate amenities of the theme.

This theme, "a materialist's Heaven," is Mr. Hueffer's present excuse for printing the poem.

I know at least that I would not keep on going if I did not feel that Heaven will be something like Rumpelmayer's tea-shop. . . . For haven't we Infantry all seen that sort of shimmer and shine, and heard the rustling and the music, through all the turmoil and the mire and the horror? We *must* have some such Heaven to make up for the deep mud, and the bitter weather, and the long lasting fears, and the cruel hunger for light, for graciousness and for grace!

It may be questioned whether this Rumpelmayer Heaven is any more material than the mansions of gold and pearl and the harping angels of an earlier revelation. At any rate the poem expresses, in our unpretentious, even a bit humorous, modern way, the same yearning for joy in love and beauty under the divine approval of a super-human but strictly personal God—"a man-and-a-half," so to speak—which our ancestors, throughout the Christian ages, have persisted in expressing through their more assertive and grandly gesticulatory arts. And moreover it expresses also, in spite of our more difficult modern questionings, their faith that this little earth and its fragile fabric of lives are not the whole story:

For God is a very clever mechanician;
And if he made this proud and goodly ship of the world,
From the maintop to the hull,
Do you think he could not finish it to the full,
With a flag and all,
And make it sail, tall and brave,
On the waters, beyond the grave?

Antwerp is a heroic ode conceived in the modern spirit and

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

fashion—it is a tribute to the bravery of Belgium, to the bravery moreover of the common man:

With no especial legends of marchings or triumphs or duty—
Assuredly that is the way of it,
The way of beauty.

The book, as a whole and in detail, makes us feel that “that is the way of it”; that kings and knights and conquerors and all the pomp and pageantry of human grandeur and bluster have had their day, and that the new “way of beauty” will follow the footsteps of the common man and penetrate the byways of his homely heroisms. *H. M.*

KREYMBORG'S PLAYS FOR POEM-MIMES

Adults who remember their first Punch-and-Judy show may smile at the assertion that there is an element of similarity between that experience and the reading of Alfred Kreymborg's plays. The grim and crude materialism of the former are ages and civilizations apart from the idealism and gentle humor of the latter, yet it is through the use of puppets in both cases that the imagination is seized and carried beyond the limits of experience. One feels now as then that the author draws upon an outside universe, a supernatural world, which though unfamiliar compels our acceptance. One does not question the queer old “figure” who talks and guides the puppets in *When the Willow Nods*, any more than of yore one doubted the devil who carried off wicked Punch, though one doesn't “believe in” either. The

Kreymborg's Plays for Poem-mimes

loves of *Manikin and Minikin*, the bisque figurines, are as real as the sorrows of Judy once were—more real for the moment than our own. The marvel is that now it is over sophisticated, unimaginative, adult minds that the poet-performer casts his spell. We accept whole-heartedly the idealism of *Blue and Green* and *People Who Die* though we have never met it; we suffer the tragedies of *Jack's House* and *When the Willow Nods* only half comforted by the delicate humor with which the poet pretends to veil them.

Through their presentation as puppets the loves and dreams of his characters are seen far-off, as through the small end of the opera-glass, and we, the audience, grow correspondingly to the size of immortals, or super-mortals. *When the Willow Nods*, the first play in the book (printed in POETRY last March) uses the device of an "old figure" who interprets and suggests the action of the dancing children. In *Blue and Green* and *People Who Die* the actors themselves are mysteriously withdrawn till they look upon themselves and interpret themselves for us. To them their past experiences become embodied as dreams. This intensifies still further their detachment from reality. These characters are groping toward interpretation—turning away from realism, from the undigested morsels of their experiences.

When we look through Mr. Kreymborg's glass we see the human comedy with whimsical sadness and humorous pity. There is delicate farce in *Jack's House*, *Lima Beans* and *Manikin and Minikin*, modulated by a deeper note, the ironic sadness of human destiny; while the stark tragedy of

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

theme in *When the Willow Nods, Blue and Green*, and *People Who Die* is lightened by a delicate accompaniment of humor. A very individual grotesquerie is found in the loveliest passages; love is not a theme for violins only—the piccolos blow delicate bubbles of mirth at it.

Kreymborg is unquotable. One cannot "lift" a line or a speech from his plays and retain their beauty, any more effectively than one can play a detached bar of music.

The mention of music carries a hint of the special magic in this poet's style. He chooses words with an apparently naïve simplicity, only to combine them subtly into repetitions which form delicate rhythms not unlike the patterns of a fugue. With each repetition the theme develops, the harmonies deepen. He gains his effect as directly, as mysteriously, as does music; there is indeed a kinship between Kreymborg's style and Bach's. I can think of no other musician combining his cerebral quality, economy of ornament and architectural sense of form. It may be considered slipshod criticism to interpret one art in terms of another, but this illustration will aid readers who know music in "feeling" Kreymborg. There is all too little co-operation between music and poetry—arts so closely allied might gain much from juxtaposition in the creative workshop of the artist. Hitherto only the modern French poets have felt this kinship, only in modern French poetry have genuine musical effects been heard. But Mr. Kreymborg, who is a thoroughly educated musician, has drawn upon the technique of counterpoint and melody in a wholly original man-

Kreymborg's Plays for Poem-mimes

ner, thereby greatly enriching his style, and introducing a new element into American verse.

People who have seen these plays performed report that they gain immensely in beauty and poignance on the stage: every word goes home, every situation shines. On the stage the obscurities which trouble the hasty reader clarify into action. In short Alfred Kreymborg is a born dramatist as well as a poet.

Marjorie Allen Seiffert

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

TWO NEW ONES

New magazines tread on each other's heels! Here are two dedicated especially to the newly risen generation.

Youth, which will speak for the Harvard Poetry Society—and others—every two months, does not run quite true to form in the first number, wherein poets quite mature elbow the younglings. However, several of the latter start off well, and there will be associate editors in various colleges and countries. We shall hope to be kept aware of the doings of young poets throughout the world.

Of *Playboy*, a *Portfolio of Art and Satire*, which will appear "at intervals," the discreet must beware—"Playboy will always elude the Wise Men, for HE is Today." He is to be edited and published by Egmont Arens at the Washington Square Bookshop, and we are promised a "merry company" of poets and artists in the first number.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

CORRESPONDENCE

ABOUT MR. UNDERWOOD'S PRIZE

To the Editor: I am enclosing herewith a newspaper clipping of *The Song of the Cheechas*, which has only just come to my notice. The poem is listed as having been printed in the June, 1918, issue of POETRY. I have had no opportunity of seeing it as printed there, and therefore I am unaware if mention was made that it is a very close paraphrase of certain passages in my book, *With Serbia into Exile*, published in 1916 by the Century Company. For your convenience I am also enclosing a copy of the passages referred to above, which appear on pages 71-73. Other phrases and figures of speech which appear in the poem are just as obviously drawn from other parts of my book. Frankly, I may say I am delighted that Mr. Underwood should have been thus impressed with the spirit of the Cheechas as I attempted to picture them, and by a skilful arrangement of my impressions and my words should have fashioned this effective chant. I should be very unwilling to be guilty of any meanness in the matter, but it seems to me he has contrived to add so very little to the original source of his verse that only simple honesty must have impelled him to give due credit to that source. If, in reality, this was not done, I cannot but think there was a definite desire to deceive the public. In view of the fact that he has taken a valuable prize without, so far as I know, having made any such acknowledgment, it appears to me but fair that you and

those who passed upon the merit of his work should be made familiar with its origin. Paul Fortier Jones

Passages from With Serbia into Exile:

The cheechas defended Chachak. Three times the Germans wrested the town from them, and each time the cheechas retook it. Only when four-fifths of them had been put out of action did the Germans finally succeed in holding the place.

With rifles of every possible description, too old for real soldiers, rejected by the first three lines of defense, the cheechas of Chachak faced as fine troops as Germany could muster, perfectly equipped, splendidly provisioned, and feeling with increasing assurance a whole nation crumbling before them. For the cheecha knows not only how to thrive on half a pound of dry bread a day, and nothing else; he knows how to lie against a tree or turn himself into a stone, and with Serbia in her death-grip, he only wished to die.

I believe the cheechas felt the loss of their country more keenly than anyone else. Most of them had lived through nearly all of her free history. Unlike the educated Serb, they could not see a bright political lining behind the present pall of blackness. But I have yet to hear a complaint from one of them. There was Dan, one of the orderlies who retreated with the English nurses. He had been to America, and he had numerous failings, but no one could see him at that time without forgetting everything except his grief. The suffering he underwent, the cold and hunger, seemed to matter nothing to him; but by the hour, at night, he would squat by his smoldering fire and mumble:

"Whata I care 'bout myself? Whata I 'mount to? T'ree million people lost! Nuthin' else don't matter. T'ree million people—t'ree million—lost!"

When, seven weeks after Chachak, I passed a company of the fourth line on top of the Montenegrin mountains, during days when there was absolutely no food for them, when they saw their comrades drop by the hundred, dead of starvation, cold, and exhaustion, when not one foot of Serbian soil was free; separated from their families in all probability forever, at best for years; miserable it seemed to me, beyond all human endurance—the cheechas were singing. I cannot forget that song. The fine sleet cut their faces, and formed grotesque icicles on their woolly

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

beards. The mountain wind blew their voices to shreds—voices mechanical, dreary, hopeless, unlike any Serbians I had ever heard before. Not until I was right among them did I recognize the song, a popular one that had sprung up since the war, its content being that "the Suabas are building houses the Serbians shall live in; the Suabas are planting corn the Serbians shall eat; the Suabas are pressing wine the Serbians shall drink."

Note by the Editor: Unquestionably Mr. Underwood will be quite willing to acknowledge that his poem was based upon Mr. Jones' book; and if he were not the most *distract* and the least explicit of men, he would probably have so informed the editors of POETRY in sending them the poem.

Whether knowledge of this fact would have influenced the jury in its award of the Helen Haire Levinson Prize it is now impossible to say. In any case the award is irrevocable. It may seem characteristic of the tribe of poets in general, and of this poet in particular, that our first information of Mr. Underwood's receiving the prize came from Santa Fé newspapers, which acknowledged the receipt of our check for two hundred dollars as his contribution to the United War Work Campaign.

Frankly, we do not think that such knowledge should have biased the jury. The passages above quoted are prose; deriving from them his basic material and his inspiration, Mr. Underwood made a poem. It was manifest that this poet, a native American who had never travelled in Serbia, must have drawn his material from printed or oral accounts. In our opinion, *The Song of the Cheechas* is not a mere paraphrase of Mr. Jones' excellent prose, but a transmutation into poetry.

MR. AIKEN AND THE ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY

Dear POETRY: Your editorial in the November issue does me too much honor. It would have been indeed quixotically courageous of me to have asked military exemption on the ground that I was a poet—it would even more, perhaps, have been presumptuous. That I did not do, however. It was not the real point at issue, for I was already

Mr. Aiken and the Essential Industry

in Class II. The question was whether under the Work-or-Fight Law the writing of poetry was to be classed as non-productive—along with billiard-marking, setting up candle-pins, and speculation in theatre-tickets—and whether artists in general would have to change their occupation. I merely submitted that poetry should not be so classed, and that it was not specifically implied in the terms of the law. Was the consequent decision more commercial, perhaps, than idealistic in motive? *Hac itur ad astra!* *Conrad Aiken*

NOTES

The poets in this number require little introduction.

Mr. William Butler Yeats, of London and Dublin, will soon issue a book of plays, including *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, from the Cuala Press in Dublin, which has published the first editions of most of his books of late—*Poems and a Play*, *Per Amica Silentiae Lunae*, etc. Later editions have been issued by the Macmillan Co.

Agnes Lee (Mrs. Otto Freer), of Chicago, is the author of two books of verse published by Sherman French & Co.

Marjorie Allen Seiffert (Mrs. Otto S.), of Moline, Ill., has contributed to most of the special magazines; sometimes with the Spectrists, of happy memory, under the pseudonym of Elijah Hay.

Alice Corbin (Mrs. Wm. P. Henderson), who is now in Santa Fé, N. M., is the author of *The Spinning Woman of the Sky* (Ralph Fletcher Seymour), and has been from the beginning associate editor of POETRY.

By a curious slip of the editorial mind Mlle. Lysiane Bernhardt was mentioned last month as the niece of Sara Bernhardt when we all know that she is the granddaughter.

We would remind our readers that next May—the last day thereof—will be the centenary of Whitman's birth. It would be a great pleasure to POETRY, its editors and subscribers, if one or more of its contributors should send in a poem, or poems, suggested by the occasion, which might enable the magazine to honor fitly the great American poet.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

The Springtide of Life—Poems of Childhood, by Algernon Charles Swinburne, illus'd by Arthur Rackham. William Heinemann, London. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia.

The Bliss of a Moment, by Benoy Kumar Sarkar. Poet Lore Co.

En Repos and Elsewhere Over There—Verses written in France 1917-1918, by Lansing Warren and Robert A. Donaldson. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Young Adventure, by Stephen Vincent Benét. Yale Univ. Press.

In the Valley of Vision—Poems Written in Time of War, by Geoffrey Faber, Captain. Longmans, Green & Co.

Sonnets and Poems, by Eleanor Farjeon. Longmans, Green & Co.

A Book of Poetry and Thought, by John Leo Coontz. Richard G. Badger.

Farm Voices, by Don C. Seitz. Harper & Bros.

Balder's Death and Loke's Punishment, by Cornelia Steketee Hulst. Open Court Pub. Co., Chicago.

Minna and Myself, by Maxwell Bodenheim. Pagan Pub. Co., N. Y.

Sonnets of the Strife with Songs, by Robert Loveman. Cornhill Co.

The Charnel Rose and Other Poems, by Conrad Aiken. Four Seas Co.

The Poems and Plays of John Masefield. In 2 vols. Macmillan Co.

War the Liberator and Other Pieces, by E. A. Mackintosh, M. C.

With Memoir and Portrait. John Lane Co.

Forward March! by Angela Morgan. John Lane Co.

ANTHOLOGIES AND TRANSLATIONS:

War Poems from the Yale Review. Yale Univ. Press.

The Jargon of Master François Villon, translated and put into English Verse by Jordan Herbert Stabler. Limited edition. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Corn from Olde Fieldes—An Anthology of English Poems from the 14th to the 17th Century, with biographical notes. Ed. by Eleanor M. Brougham. John Lane Co.

PROSE:

The Writing and Reading of Verse, by Lieutenant C. E. Andrews. Appleton.

Scènes de la Vie Littéraire à Paris, par André Billy. La Renaissance du Livre, Paris.

Dream Boats—Portraits and Histories of Fauns, Fairies, Fishes, and other pleasant creatures, written and illustrated by Dugald Stewart Walker. Doubleday Page & Co.

 Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. XIII
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CHINESE WRITTEN WALL PICTURES

AN EVENING MEETING

THE night is the color of spring mists.
The lamp-flower falls,
And the flame bursts out brightly.
In the midst of the disorder of the dressing-table
Lies a black eye-stone.
A golden hairpin has fallen to the ground.
She leans against a screen,
Arch, coquettish, welcoming his arrival.
Then suddenly striking the strings of her table-lute,
She sings—
And her face is like rain whitening the Gorge of Witches
And like the bright busy movement of the Western Sea.

Li Hai-ku—Nineteenth Century

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE EMPEROR'S RETURN FROM A JOURNEY TO THE SOUTH

Like a saint he comes,
The Most Noble.
In his lacquered state chariot
He awes the hundred living things.
He is clouded with the purple smoke of incense,
A round umbrella
Protects the Son of Heaven.
Exquisite is the beauty
Of the two-edged swords,
Of the chariots,
Of the star-embroidered shoes of the attendants.
The Sun and Moon fans are borne before him,
And he is preceded by sharp spears
And the blowing brightness of innumerable flags.
The spring wind proclaims the Emperor's return,
Binding the ten thousand districts together
In a chorded harmony of Peace and Satisfaction,
So that the white-haired old men and the multitudes rejoice,
And I also wish to add the tribute of my secret writings.

Wen Cheng-ming—Sixteenth Century

ON SEEING THE PORTRAIT OF A BEAUTIFUL CONCUBINE

Fine rain,
Spring mud
Slippery as bean curds.

Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell

In a rose-red flash, she approaches—
Red like wine;
Tottering as though overcome with wine.
Her little feet slip on the sliding path—
Who will support her?
Clearly it is her picture
We see here,
In a rose-red silken dress,
Her hair plaited like the folds
Of the hundred clouds.
It is Manshu.

Ch'en Hung-Shou—Nineteenth Century

CALLIGRAPHY

The writing of Li Po-hai
Is like the vermilion bird
And the blue-green dragon.
It drifts slowly as clouds drift;
It has the wide swiftness of wind.
Hidden within it lurk the dragon and the tiger.

The writing of Chia, the official,
Is like the high hat of ceremonial.
It flashes like flowers in the hair,
And its music is the faint, sweet tinkling
Of jade girdle-pendants.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

But I stand beside the Lang Temple,
Doing nothing
And speaking not at all.

Liang T'ung-shu—Eighteenth Century

THE PALACE BLOSSOMS

When the rain ceases,
The white water-flowers of Ch'ang Lo stroll together at
sunset
In the City by the River.
The young girls are no longer confined
In the tower pavilions,
But may gaze at the green water
Whirling under the bridge of many turnings.

T'ai Ta-mien—Eighteenth Century

ONE GOES A JOURNEY

He is going to the T'ung T'ing lake,
My friend whom I have loved so many years.
The spring wind startles the willows
And they break into pale leaf.
I go with my friend
As far as the river-bank.
He is gone—
And my mind is filled and overflowing
With the things I did not say.

Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell

Again the white water-flower
Is ripe for plucking.
The green pointed swords of the iris
Splinter the brown earth.
To the south of the river
Are many cinnamon trees.
I gather branches of them to give to my friend
At his return.

Liu Shih-an—Eighteenth Century

FROM THE STRAW HUT AMONG THE SEVEN PEAKS

I

From the high pavilion of the great rock,
I look down at the green river.
There is the sail of a returning boat.
The birds are flying in pairs.
The faint snuff color of trees
Closes the horizon.
All about me
Sharp peaks jag upward,
But through my window,
And beyond,
Is the smooth, broad brightness
Of the setting sun.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

II

Clouds brush the rocky ledge.
In the dark green shadow left by the sunken sun
A jade fountain flies,
And a little stream,
Thin as the fine thread spun by sad women in prison
 chambers
Slides through the grasses
And whirls suddenly upon itself
Avoiding the sharp edges of the iris leaves.
Few people pass here.
Only the hermits of the hills come in companies
To gather the Imperial Fern.

Lu Kun—Nineteenth Century

ON THE CLASSIC OF THE HILLS AND SEA

In what place does the cinnabar-red tree of the alchemists
 seed?
Upon the sun-slopes
Of Mount Mi
It pushes out its yellow flowers
And rounds its crimson fruit.
Eat it and you will live forever.

The frozen dew is like white jade.
It shimmers with the curious light of gems.

Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell

Does the Yellow Emperor regard these things
Because it is the fashion to do so
Among people of importance?

T'ao Ch'ien—Fourth Century

A RECLUSE

A cold rain blurs the edges of the river.
Night enters Wu.
In the level brightness of dawn
I saw my friend start alone for the Ch'u mountain.
I gave him this message for my friends and relations:
My heart is a piece of ice in a jade cup.

Wang Chang-ling—Tenth Century

AFTER HOW MANY YEARS

Spring

The willows near the roadside rest-house are soft with new-
burst leaves.
I saunter along the river path,
Listening to the occasional beating of the ferry drum.
Clouds blow and separate,
And between them I see the watch towers
Of the distant city
They come in official coats
To examine my books.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Months go by;
Years slide backwards and disappear.
Musing,
I shut my eyes
And think of the road I have come,
And of the spring weeds
Choking the fields of my house.

Summer

The rain has stopped.
The clouds drive in a new direction.
The sand is so dry and hard that my wooden shoes ring
 upon it
As I walk.
The flowers in the wind are very beautiful.
A little stream quietly draws a line
Through the sand.
Every household is drunk with sacrificial wine,
And every field is tall with millet
And pale young wheat.
I have not much business.
It is a good day.
Ha! Ha!
I will write a poem
On all this sudden brightness.

Autumn

Hoar frost is falling,
And the water of the river runs clear.
The moon has not yet risen,
But there are many stars.
On the opposite bank
Autumn lamps are burning in the windows.
I am sick,
Sick with all the illnesses there are.
I can bear this cold no longer,
And a great pity for my whole past life
Fills my mind.
The boat has started at last.
Oh, be careful not to run foul
Of the fishing-nets!

Winter

I was lonely in the cold valleys
Where I was stationed.
But I am still lonely,
And when no one is near
I sigh.
My gluttonous wife rails at me
To guard her bamboo shoots.
My son has neglected
The vegetables.
Oh yes,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Old red rice can satisfy hunger,
And poor people can buy muddy, unstrained wine
On credit.
But the pile of land-tax bills
Is growing;
I will go over and see my neighbor,
Leaning on my staff.

Li Hai-ku—Nineteenth Century

THE INN AT THE WESTERN LAKE

The inn leans against the mountain's root.
The smooth skin of the water shines,
And the clouds slip over the sky.
This is the twilight of dawn and dusk.
On the top of Hsi Lung
The hill priest sits in the evening
And meditates.
Two—
Two—
Those are the lights of fishing-boats
Arriving at the door.

Wang Ching-seng—Nineteenth Century

*Translated by Florence Ayscough
English version by Amy Lowell*

THE FAREWELL

When in a plunge of water the great ship
Had sunk to the sea's depth,
Its blind body dragging after it
Halyards and dripping masts,

When toward the four quarters of the night
Its boats had all perished,
Each beyond sight of the others,
Each with a high wave
Covering its final cries,

When the furious water had wiped
From its surface all signs,
There was still in the sea
A man alive and swimming.

.

He knew that the land was far off
And that before he could feel, with a cry of joy,
Becoming real to the reach of his feet
The shore of the tide of wreckage,

There would have to be day after day,
Turn after turn, exhaustion and sleeping and eating.

He acknowledged his appointed end,
But he thought himself strong and he wished
To use calmly the moments of this strength,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

To use for slow and holy profit
The last warmth of his body,
The last illumination of his mind.

He let himself be borne by the fury of the water,
Which heaved him high on the edge of its surge,
Then plunged him dizzily
To the foot of its deep and moving walls.

Huge waves came,
Charging him like rams,
Tossing his body
On their lowered horns.

Dykes burst before him,
Mountains shattered over him,
Hail beat across him,
Tigers played with his head.
The water enwound him,
Trying to dissolve him,
And for an eternity
The vast liquid tumult
Was at his very core.

Then for an instant about him
Calm came,
And the sea took respite,
And there was the seething of broken foam,
And his senses found the air again like another world.

So it went until dawn.
And to live longer he ceased swimming,
Rather with his limbs forcing
The water to uphold him.

So it was until dawn,
And then the cold sheathed him;
And only then fell
The blind hope from his body—
That proud thing which gives to men
The custom of their victories
And the subjection of the earth;
Only then closed in on him
The awful certainty.

There was at the heart of this man
A life unknown to himself,
A life simple and still full
Of child-like faith,
Which never would have believed
That for its most favored guest,
Its most loving son,
Nature can be at times
An iron stranger, deaf
And absolute and pitiless.

And suddenly into the heart of this man
Came the shock and the wound of exile.
The sea, its sound, its motion,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Its power, its volume,
Overwhelmed him with horror.

He hunted out of his head the noise of the water
And he closed his eyes to escape it far away. . . .

.

He saw a town
Touched softly by the sun.

Fine new shoes
Went brightly creaking
Over the clean pavements.

Along the row of shops,
Behind the shutters,
All the clocks
Could be heard
Striking noon.

.

And then by the glimmer of a night-lamp,
He saw a closed room
Where a family lay asleep.

He heard the sound of their breathing,
The crossing and confusing of rhythms.

He leaned over the beds,
Heavy and humid with sleep.

In one lay two children together;
Their bodies were uncovered,
And huddled in a hollow
Like kittens.

.

He saw again a young girl
Watering flowers in a garden.
One of her hands caught up her dress,
The other was balancing as far as she could reach
The heavy watering-can,
To distribute a curving shower
Without wetting the tips of her shoes held tight together.

The little clustering leaves
Whispered content;
And even their wet fragrance came to him,
And the very sound on the path
Of footsteps crunching the pebbles.

He saw also streets cluttered with chairs,
Where one sits to drink and to watch the crowd.
And he saw soldiers gambling and wrestling
In the barracks-yard at dusk.

He saw deep lanes, he saw wheat-fields,
He saw also the straight roads
Where you say good-day to the people you pass.

And last he saw again the great realm

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Where thoughts touch and exchange,
Where all is intimately blent from all the earth.
He saw again the land of lands
Where all prolongs itself in one embrace.

It was then he wished to utter words,
To give thanks for his whole heritage.
And he wished to speak them aloud,
In order that he might hear with his ears
Once more the genius of words,
The sound of a voice.

And so he spoke as if he were praying—
He pronounced, in the middle of the sea,
The words that serve for love
And for praise.

He sought them all out and repeated them,
As one dying of thirst sucks at the juice of a fruit.

And when there were no more of them in his head
He must sing
To satiate his farewell,
Sing without words. . . .

.

He must sing:

It was the loveliest song—
Of the pang of love and sadness;

Charles Vildrac, tr. by Witter Bynner

It was the most poignant song of man
That a man ever had sung.

And though it routed in his head
The tenacious voices of the sea,
Though it was more august in his head
Than great organs,
No one here heard it.

And no one here can be surprised
By suddenly recalling it,
By humming it to himself,
Believing it sprung from his memory;

It was dissolved in the wind
Like snow in a stream. . . .

His teeth were chattering as he sang it
And water burned his eyes;
But it was not the water of the sea.

*From the French of Charles Vildrac
Translated by Witter Bynner*

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

CRAYONS OF DOMINICA

UNDER THE SAMAN

Under the circular shadow of the jetty's saman
Creamy high-humped cattle munch the sweet pods:
The zebus browse placidly against the blue and black
Of the sea and a distant promontory.
On this promontory de Bouillé defeated Stuart;
On this sea Rodney defeated de Grasse.

THE LITTLE DONKEY

Gi! ti bourique à-moin!
And around the bend
Swing enormous panniers
Swaying to tiny mincing feet.

Are you weary, little friend,
Mouse to these huge mornes?
Or does the beauty of your burden
Make it light?—
Lilies and fresh white roses
For Notre-Dame de Lourdes!

FIRST GROWTH

The natives call this shadowless silence the *grands-bois*
And tell you these matted buttressed masses are trees—

Richard Butler Glaenzer

Fromagers, chataigners, bois blancs and gommiers—
That solid darkness above, nothing but leaves.
No! I am creeping between the legs of monsters,
Mammoths and mastodons tangled in merciless vines.
It is their bellies that block the scorching sunlight:
The drops that fall are their sweat as they strain to the
clouds.

CARIBBEAN NIGHTS

There are too many stars:
They jostle;
They quarrel with the moon
Till she grows sullen.

The fireflies are more quiet,
More generous;
Their little lamps reveal flowers
And love-looks and smiles.

Richard Butler Glaenzer

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

ORPHEUS IN THE STREET

I passed a hurdy-gurdy playing in the street
A haunting ancient tune to tempt the feet;
 But nobody paused to listen,
 Nobody paused to look,
Although the ragged tune entranced me in the street.

I thought my heart would break as I stood listening there
To ragged Orpheus grinding out his air;
 For nobody paused to listen,
 Nobody paused to look,
Although the ancient gods of Greece flocked round us there.

IN WINTER

I am content to wait for spring,
 To cherish winter days;
I am grown fearful of the thing
 That hurts in hidden ways.

I almost fear for March to pass
 Because of spring's swift feet;
The hushed green coming of the grass
 Will make the earth too sweet.

B. K. van Slyke

THE ALIEN

Mississippi, you mothered me when the child in me was
young;
You taught me the song of the soothing waves, the current's
cooing tongue;
You laughed with me when my heart leaped high, you told
how a grief is borne:
The world away from your shining smile is a strange world,
half forlorn,
And the old child in me yearns for you—the strength of
your steady flow—
With a longing only the river-born, your wandering children,
know.

C. Cunningham

MOUNTAIN TOPS

Oh, splendid are the mountain tops
That thrust aside the sky;
No dweller in the valley land
Has thrilled in them as I!

But lonely are the mountain tops
To him who walks apart—
No peasant in the valley land
Bears half so hurt a heart!

John Bakeless

IN THE NIGHT

But you have been dead so long—
You have been dead a year,
You have been dead so many months, so many weeks,
And many, many days!
You have sunk deep into death,
You are resting in every limb.
You have turned away your face from me to sleep—
You are so quiet
You have forgotten me.

Sometimes I am afraid that you are alive—
I wake in my bed, I moan,
I turn restlessly from side to side.
O my beloved, I will forget you—
You shall not be waked by my moaning,
You shall not hear my cries;
I will be quiet,
You shall sink deep into death.

I will forget you.
I will remember you only with the taking in of my breath,
I will remember you only with the beating of my heart.
I will forget you.

Margaret Judson

EN MASSE

You too, America, have seen the hugeness of days
Break with unguessed being out of the sullen past;
To you the massive hour has called,
Halting you amid random progress,
Giving revelation, blasting, huge, of its being.

Ungainly grandeur rises from your soil,
Doom light stands above man's dank shadow.
Above wrangle, above hypocrisy,
Light lifts its being, America,
Hugely above you.

.

Terrible fluidities lurch through you, America.
Blind, slathering, fluent, the liquid of passion
Lifts you upon dark urgencies of being.

Tides move with terrible, unknowing will;
Grim tides come from the sea
Lifting all upon the breast of being, holding all
In the cruelty of oneness. The flood,
The flood of being, the surge
Of mobbed thought! The ebb, America,
The ebb again!

.

The skin of time bursts with thick noises,
Formless, spilling in huge, helpless flux.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Gorged moments open with sodden split;
The clog and glut build shapeless things.

Time lolls in unexpected disgorgement—
Release, heavy war, loosed inhibitions; the sullen flux
Begins. All is overwhelming, limp, massive.

Where are the smooth Latin hours,
Neat with emptiness, indifferent optimism?
How has time debouched on unready men
These guttural, dizzy mists,
This massive slime of being?

.

Fulness lies across these lives
In savage, self-created burden. Terrors
Raise themselves hugely from the soul
Like the massive water of breakers.
The inhuman, passionate quest rolls
Monstrously across placid lives, building
Immensity in staggered, foaming heaps.

Whence the blind utterness of these aggregations,
America? Who validates this load—
Congested, heaving experience, discreet things, poured
In immense preoccupation into the soul?
Whence the massive utterness of circumstance?

Baker Brownell

After Word

Where spaceless night rests upon the water
Can you find being:
There a star wounds the liquid darkness
With still, white stab;
A ripple lifts its soft load of light,
And returns to the fluid soul
Of the night water;
Light sinks pervasively into the textures of darkness,
Deep into the dusk of water;
The being of light sifts into all its spaces;
Light, ineffably its meaning
Fumes in fragrant faintness
Amid drenching visions.

Baker Brownell

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

POEMS

TOMMIES IN THE TRAIN

The sun shines.
The coltsfoot flowers along the railway banks
Shine flat like coin which Zeus in thanks
Showers on our lines.

A steeple
In purplish elms; daffodils
Sparkle beneath; luminous hills
Beyond—but no people.

England—O Danaë
To this spring of cosmic gold
Which falls on your lap of mould!
What then are we?

What are we—
Clay-colored, who roll in fatigue
As the train runs league after league
From our destiny?

Some hand is over my face,
Some dark hand. Peeping through the fingers,
I see a world that lingers
Behind, yet keeps pace.

Always, as I peep
Through the fingers that cover my face,
Something seems falling from place,
Seems to roll down the steep.

Is it the train,
That falls like a meteorite
Backward in space, to alight
Never again?

Or is it the illusory world,
That falls from reality
As we look? Or are we
Like a thunderbolt hurled?

One or another
We are lost, since we fall apart
Forever, forever depart
From each other.

WAR BABY

The child, like a mustard seed,
Rolls out of the husk of death
Into the woman's fertile, fathomless lap

Look—it has taken root!
See how it flourisheth!
See how it rises with magical, rosy sap!

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

As for our faith, it was there
When we did not know, did not care;
It fell from our husk like a little hasty seed.

Sing—it is all we need.
Sing, for the little weed
Will flourish its branches in heaven when we slumber
beneath.

OBSEQUIAL CHANT

Surely you've trodden straight
To the very door!
Surely you took your fate
Faultlessly. Now 'tis too late
To say more.

It is evident you were right—
That man has a course to go,
A voyage to sail beyond the charted seas.
So you have passed from sight,
And our sighings blow
Back from that straight horizon which ends all one sees.

Now, like a vessel in port,
You unlade your riches into death,
And glad are the watchful dead to receive you there.
Let the dead sort

Your cargo; breath from breath
Let them disencumber your bounty, let them all share.

I imagine dead hands are brighter,
Their fingers in sunset shine
With jewels of passion once broken through you as a prism.
Dead breasts are whiter
For your wrath; and yes, I opine
They anoint their brows with your blood, as a perfect
chrism.

It is evident you were right—
There are bounds to break,
Sumptuous passage from sight,
For you, and sighs down the white
Path of your wake.

Now to the dead you've given
Your last allegiance.
But woe unto us who are driven
After you, hostile to heaven
And its hateful legions.

BREAD UPON THE WATERS

So, you are lost to me.

Ah you, you ear of corn straight lying,
What food is here for the darkly flying
Fowls of the Afterwards?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

White bread afloat on the waters,
Cast out by the hand that scatters
Food untowards,

Will you come back when the tide turns?
After many days? My heart burns
To know.

Will you come back after many days
To say your say as a traveller says
More marvel than woe?

Drift then, for the soundless birds,
As fish, in their shadow-waved herds,
To approach you.

Drift then, bread cast out;
Drift, lest I fall in doubt
And reproach you.

For you are lost to me!

PENTECOSTAL

Shall I tell you, then, how it is?

There came a cloven gleam,
Like a tongue of darkened flame,
To burn in me.

And so I seem
To have you still the same
In one world with me.

In the flicker of a flower,
In a worm that is blind, yet strives,
In the mouse that pauses to listen,

Glimmers our
Shadow as well, and deprives
Them none of their glisten.

In each shaken morsel
Our shadow trembles
As if it rippled from out of us hand in hand.

We are part and parcel
In shadow, nothing dissembles
Our darkened universe. You understand?

For I have told you plainly how it is.

NOSTALGIA

The waning moon looks upward, this grey night
Sheers round the heavens in one smooth curve
Of easy sailing. Odd red wicks serve
To show where the ships at sea move out of sight.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

This place is palpable me, for here I was born
Of this self-same darkness. Yet the shadowy house below
Is out of bounds, and only the old ghosts know
I have come—they whimper about me, welcome and mourn.

My father suddenly died in the harvesting corn,
And the place is no longer ours. Watching, I hear
No sound from the strangers; the place is dark, and fear
Opens my eyes till the roots of my vision seem torn.

Can I go nearer, never towards the door?
The ghosts and I, we mourn together, and shrink
In the shadow of the cart-shed—hovering on the brink
For ever, to enter the homestead no more.

Is it irrevocable? Can I really not go
Through the open yard-way? Can I not pass the sheds
And through to the mowie? Only the dead in their beds
Can know the fearful anguish that this is so.

I kiss the stones. I kiss the moss on the wall,
And wish I could pass impregnate into the place.
I wish I could take it all in a last embrace.
I wish with my breast I could crush it, perish it all.

D. H. Lawrence

COMMENT

THE VIERECK INCIDENT

NOW that the Great War is over, a number of smaller wars remain to be fought, wars which have been held in abeyance while the nation was training every nerve and muscle for the enormous task. Probably the most important of these smaller wars is one which will never be over, a war which requires eternal vigilance and a sword ever unsheathed if the world is to be made, and kept, safe for democracy—the spiritual war for freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the press.

These are fundamental human rights, elements of that liberty for which, together with life and the pursuit of happiness, our forefathers fought the Revolutionary War, unfurled the Stars and Stripes, and wrote the Constitution of the United States. In the Constitution they inserted a clause protecting these rights. But a constitution, however well written, does not fulfill itself; sooner or later it will become a scrap of paper unless it is fulfilled by the spiritual fervor of those who swear allegiance to it from generation to generation.

The immediate text of these remarks is the recent expulsion of George Sylvester Viereck from the Poetry Society of America; though, heaven knows, since poetry is a free expressor of the spirit of man, a magazine devoted to the art might find a text in certain provisions of the conscription and espionage acts which may hold conscientious objectors

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

and other peace-propagandists (among them a number of poets) in prison for a decade or two after the war they opposed is over. Suppressive texts are only too numerous these days, and if we choose the case of Mr. Viereck for special emphasis it is because it is almost a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole tendency, involving a rich irony which invites the gods to laugh. When a society of poets—poets being nothing if not arch-individualists, jealous guardians of spiritual freedom—when such a society becomes more suppressive of one of its members than the United States government has been during a year and a half of war, then it is time to inquire where we are going and when we may hope to return to ancestral first principles.

We pass over the legal aspects of the question, which Shaemus O'Sheel, Mr. Viereck's champion in the P. S. A., presents in his circular letter to members. Whether the executive committee had power or not, under the P. S. A. constitution to expel a member, it would seem that the whole society might have been permitted to vote on the question.

But whatever may be the strict letter of the law, the artistic and spiritual implications of the incident are more important. A society of poets should be the freest body in the world, the most tolerant of individual idiosyncrasy of thought and word. If a member's opinions are too idiosyncratic, that should be the very place for him to find it out, through, not suppression but expression, through give-and-take with other minds. The punishment of extremists, if

The Viereck Incident

war or other violence makes it expedient, may safely be left to the authorized agencies of law and order. If poets must revise their opinions before getting together, must think by rule and speak by the card, then their association becomes about as stimulating as a padded quilt.

The whole tragi-comic incident is but a detail of a menacing public mood. The mood is equally menacing whether it comes from one extreme or the other—from autocracy, military or industrial on the one hand, or mob tyranny on the other. In either case it is destructive of liberty and provocative of violence.

I remember my youthful horror over the imprisonment of John Bunyan, William Penn, and other famous worthies, for their advocacy of certain doctrines, among them an objection to war. I remember my self-righteous satisfaction that such outrages upon human liberty were impossible in our enlightened era and nation. Yet today men and women—some of them mere boys and girls—are in prison at Fort Leavenworth for ten, twelve, fifteen years for exactly the same reason, and I doubt if the jailors are so merciful as Bunyan's, who allowed his prisoner ink, paper and time to write a masterpiece. No doubt our modern prisoners, of a great republic now happily at peace, wish that they were in old Russia, with some tzar's birthday coming along to give them hope of amnesty!

More tolerance—this should be the demand of all who think and feel, especially of all poets—more tolerance for conscientious objectors and other recalcitrant opinionaters.

H. M.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

WRITTEN PICTURES

Of late years, considerable attention has been attracted to Chinese poetry and to Chinese painting; but as yet the art peculiar to the Far East, the art considered by the Chinese as the most perfect medium by which "man can express himself, can record the reactions of his personality to the world he lives in" has entirely escaped notice. I refer to the *Txū Hua*—"written pictures" or "hanging-on-the-wall poems."

It is of course quite natural that this should be the case; general knowledge of the Far East, of its customs, its art, its theory of life, its reactions to its environment, has been, is, and must be for some time to come, superficial. While a knowledge of its language, without which real comprehension is impossible, has been attained by comparatively few Occidentals. It seems likely, therefore, that the *Txū Hua* will remain unnoticed and unappreciated until a much closer understanding is established with the Far East.

Yet what art could be more subtle, more refined, more truly aesthetic! A beautiful thought perpetuated in beautiful hand-writing and hung upon the wall to suggest a mental picture—does not the possession of such a medium rouse the envy of Occidental imagists, who are indeed the spiritual descendants of the East?

In China, the arts of poetry and calligraphy have their common root in the ideographs which form the written language; these wonderful ideographs and the art of calligraphy are vividly described by Lafcadio Hearn in his *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*:

No rigid convention fetters the fancy of the calligraphist; each strives to make his character more beautiful than any others, and generation upon generation of artists have been toiling from time immemorial with the like emulation so that through centuries of tireless effort and study the primitive ideograph has been evolved into a thing of beauty indescribable. It consists only of a certain number of brush strokes, but in each stroke there is an indescribable secret art of grace, proportion, imperceptible curve, which makes it seem alive, and bears witness that even in the lightning moment of its creation the artist felt for its ideal shape equally along its entire length.

In writing thus, however, Hearn refers only to form, he does not mention what constitutes the soul of the character, which is its composition. These marvelous collections of brush strokes which we call Chinese characters are really separate pictographic representations of complete thoughts. Complex characters are composed not of strokes, but of more simple characters, each having its own peculiar meaning and usage; thus, when used in combination, each plays its part in modifying either the sense or the sound of the complex; it is therefore impossible to seize a poet's complete meaning unless each character is analyzed and broken up into its component parts; this can only be done by a careful study of the ideograph *in its original form*. Many have been so altered during the centuries which have passed since they were first traced, as to be almost unrecognizable.

About 200 A. D., realizing that this alteration was taking place, a scholar named Hsü Shih wrote the dictionary known as the *Shuo Wên Chieh Tzŭ* or the *Speech and Writing—Characters Untied*, containing about ten thousand characters in their primitive and final forms. This work is on the desk of every scholar in the Far East and is studied with the

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

greatest reverence. Many editions have appeared since it was written, and by its aid one can trace the genealogy of characters in the most complete manner. While translators are apt to ignore this important matter of "genealogy," if one may so call it, of the characters, it is ever present in the mind of the Chinese poet or scholar who is familiar with the original form, indeed he may be said to find his overtones in the actual composition of the character he is using.

In a recent review of a volume of Chinese poetry, a critic in the *London Times* writes:

The difference seems to be that the Chinese poet hardly knows he is one. The great poets of Europe, in their themes and their language, insist that they are poets—what they do is accompanied with a magnificent gesture; but the Chinese poet starts talking in the most ordinary language and voice of the most ordinary things, and his poetry seems to happen suddenly out of the commonplace as if it were some beautiful action happening in the routine of actual life.

This critic can have no knowledge of the Chinese language, as nothing can be further from the truth than his remark. It is true that the Oriental poet finds his themes in the most ordinary affairs of every-day life, but he describes them in a very special, carefully chosen medium. The simplest child's primer is written in a language never used in speaking, while the most highly educated scholar would never dream of using the same phrases in conversation which he would use were he writing an essay, a poem, or a state document; nor would he use the same written style for these three productions. For instance, in speaking of "sunset" one would probably say, in Chinese, quite simply "sun

down"; in writing a poet would, however, employ a character which means "the sun disappearing in the grass at the horizon"; a character which in its primitive form was an actual picture of the sun vanishing in long grass. Each language—the spoken, the poetic, the literary, the documentary—has its own construction, its own class of characters, and its own symbolism. A translator must therefore make a special study of whichever he wishes to render.

Although several great sinologues have written on the subject of Chinese poetry, none, so far as I am aware, has devoted his exclusive attention to the poetic style, nor has any translator availed himself of the assistance, so essential to success, of a poet, that is, one trained in the art of seizing the poetic value in shades of meaning; while, on the other hand, such poets as have been moved to make beautiful renditions of Chinese originals, have been hampered by inadequate translations. In a word, English translations of Chinese poetry, have not, as yet, been the result of collaboration between a sinologue and a poet. We have therefore but a faint conception of its possibilities.

It is time that a knowledge of Chinese art should come from a direct study of native sources. Although we are deeply indebted to the Japanese for all that they have done to make the whole subject comprehensible, we must never forget that in accepting their opinions and their renditions we are accepting those of a people alien to the Chinese, a people who differ widely in their philosophy, their temperament, and their ideals; a people who, although they have

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

borrowed the ideographs of the Chinese have, in many cases, modified and altered the original meanings. For this reason, Chinese poems translated from Japanese transcriptions cannot fail to lose some of their native flavor and allusion, indeed it is not possible that they come very near the originals.

It is impossible to do more than hint at a few of the points which further study of Chinese poetry will bring out clearly; we have, for instance, not mentioned the characteristic method of reading poems in a modulated chant, which is well described by Mrs. Tietjens in *POETRY* for October, 1916. She confines her remarks to the Classics; they apply, however, to a much wider field.

The poems which appear in the current issue are taken from a collection of *Tzũ Hua* once in the possession of a Chinese gentleman of keenly aesthetic taste, and are excellent examples of an art universally popular in China.

It is a thousand pities that the readers of *POETRY* cannot realize how extremely literal Miss Lowell's arrangements are. Her remarkable gift, first shown in *Six French Poets*, for seizing the essence of the allusion which a poet wishes to convey, has enabled her to render in a phrase the different parts of a complicated character in using which the poet expresses a complete thought.

It is only by digging until the very roots of the character are laid bare that Chinese poetry can be really understood.

Florence Ayscough

REVIEWS

PERFUME OF CATHAY

Chinese Poems, translated by Arthur Waley. Constable & Co., London.

Reading this book, I have been saying to myself over and over again, "This is poetry"—an experience which has not often come to me. The authors who appear in these pages lived in a country I have never seen, wore strange garments, and wrote in a tongue I do not understand. But thanks to the devoted labor and the scholarly skill of their translator—a skill that is above suspicion—I have been enabled to come in touch with these men, many of whom are anonymous, and some of whom lived in such ancient times that they are mere shadows more remote than Homer. And yet all these men are now, because they were poets, my personal friends. They have often spoken to my heart and my heart has listened. They have given me songs for which I am eternally grateful. And though none of my gratitude may reach their ears in the kingdom beyond the grave, yet I know I must express it now, that others may come and read their songs in turn, and feel the same as I.

These Chinese poets fulfilled exactly Matthew Arnold's famous phrase "to see life steadily and to see it whole." And I am quite certain that they were the only poets who ever did so. Mr. Waley says cautiously in his *Introduction*, "To most Europeans the momentary flash of Athenian questioning will seem worth more than all the centuries of

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Chinese assent." But is this true? Is it true that the world-war of today—another momentary flash of questioning—is worth more, say, than Mr. Waley's volume? On the one side, thousands of men killed, thousands more maimed, whole countries laid waste, hunger, disease, desolation, in order to put a stop to the ambitions of one man who has presumed to question the right of others to live on as they were accustomed. On the other hand a handful of songs—mere words about life, death, sorrow, disappointment, vanity. Mere words against armies! Mere words against time!

The one quality that is common to all these Chinese singers is their absolute sincerity, their refusal to accept any make-believes about life. To them men are neither heroes nor villains; they are simply products of nature, very much on a level with trees and animals in Nature's eyes, fated to the same sorrow, pain and oblivion. A great modesty before Nature is the Chinese poet's chief characteristic. Instead of informing us confidently with Whitman,

Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen,

he usually exclaims despondently,

Often I fear that these untalented limbs
Will be laid at last in an unnamed grave!

This refusal to see anything especially fine or important or heroic about man and his destiny, is the elementary principle of the Chinese character. From this it comes about that the Chinese poet has no use for the figures of speech, huddled adjectives, verbal climaxes, tortured metaphors, and so forth, which his occidental rival uses so constantly. Mr. Waley

speaks of "the habitual clichés of Chinese poetry." The phrase is perfectly just. Chinese poetry is a set of stock phrases, of mere clichés. There is a strong analogy here to Chinese painting. In Chinese painting, the forms are little more than a series of old conventions. The color is nothing more than black and white. Yet in the spacing of these forms, and in the variation of these tones, an art has been evolved that surpasses western art as far in its power of suggesting the infinite moods of Nature, as western art surpasses it in sheer brilliant craftsmanship. And these poets, working with characters that, because of their limited ideographic significance, and later calligraphic development, might almost be called conventional paintings in miniature, evolved poems like the following, where every word is sheer commonplace, but where the total effect is simply overwhelming:

When I was young, I was out of tune with the herd;
My only love was for the hills and mountains.
Unwittingly I fell into the web of the World's dust
And was not free until my thirtieth year.
The migrant bird longs for its old wood,
The fish in the tank thinks of its native pool.
I had rescued from wildness a patch of the southern moor;
And, still rustic, I returned to field and garden.
My ground covers no more than ten acres:
My thatched cottage has eight or nine rooms.
Elms and willows cluster by the eaves:
Peach trees and plum trees grow before the hall.
Hazy, hazy the distant hamlets of men;
Steady the smoke of the half-deserted village;
A dog barks somewhere in the deep lanes,
A cock crows at the top of the mulberry trees.
At gate and court yard—no murmur of the world's dust:
In the empty rooms—leisure and deep stillness.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Long I lived checked by the bars of a cage:
Now I have turned again to nature and freedom

Mr. Waley may assure us as often as he likes that a poem like this was the product of a race of "torpid mainlanders" whose "thoughts set out on no strange quests and adventures." I simply refuse to believe it. No one can write a poem like that if his mind and imagination are torpid. No; it is only after passing through innumerable quests and adventures, after exhausting every other possible experience, that one can have this experience and express it in this way. Either Mr. Waley has failed to understand the depths of the oriental temperament, like many another western observer, or his introduction is nothing but an elaborate piece of *camouflage* designed to conceal his true views.

But to return to the question, whether the momentary flash of Athenian questioning is worth more than all the centuries of Chinese assent? It is quite true that to a cultivated Chinaman the Greek attitude of mind would have seemed ignoble, savage; let us out with the word—Hunnish. Achilles sulking in his tent and letting the Greek army go to ruin without lifting a hand to save it; Medea slaughtering her children to get even with Jason; Ajax infuriated to madness because he was not awarded Achilles' armour; Danaë set adrift on the ocean with her infant a helpless prey of wind and wave, simply because she had followed the dictates of Nature—themes such as these would have seemed horrible to the Chinese poet, and to treat such themes as fine heroic episodes would have seemed even worse. To regard Clytemnestra as a fine creation of the imagination would

Perfume of Cathay

have seemed to him as horrible and unnatural as to regard poison-gas, gangrene, and trench-fever as fine things. There may have been Clytemnestras even in China—I do not know. But the nearest we get to them in poetry is something like the following:

Entering the hall, she meets the new wife;
Leaving the gate, she runs into her former husband.
Words stick—she does not manage to say anything.
She presses her hands together and hesitates;
Agitates moon-like fan, sheds pearl-like tears,
Realises she loves him just as much as ever,
That her present pain will never come to an end.

The fact that this poem was written by a blood-stained murderous tyrant, a veritable Chinese Nero, ought to start an interesting discussion amongst our Freudians. Now that the Freudian theory of art is fashionable, and many hold that poetry is only the expression of some suppressed impulse, transmuted to the imaginative plane, what are we to make of such a poem as this? Does it represent an impulse towards pity and humanity, in the character of a singularly depraved and vicious man? And if so—if the vicious man expresses his good impulse, and a good man expresses his underlying baseness, in the form of imaginative experience, what then becomes of ethical progress, and of the preponderance of good over evil, that we are so often assured is the supreme characteristic of great art? Perhaps the Chinese, with their refusal to affirm the value of life, either good or evil, are right after all:

Prosperity and decay each have their season.
Success is bitter when it is slow in coming.
Man's life is not metal or stone,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

He cannot far prolong the days of his fate.
Suddenly he follows in the way of things that change.
Fame is the only treasure that endures.

The vanity of existence—this thought, so repellant to our occidental minds that we have tacked an optimistic conclusion in *Ecclesiastes*, made of *Job* a tragedy—instead of what it is, a quite common experience—and declared that Shakespeare's mind was jangled and out of tune with itself when he wrote *Measure for Measure*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Troilus and Cressida*—the vanity and the nothingness of existence, this is the one fundamental idea that all these Chinese poets accept quite comfortably and complacently. And just because they do accept it, they make most of our western poetry seem like silly mouthing and wasted sound and fury. They do not pretend to unravel the dark scheme of things: to discover any external meaning in the mysteries of life, birth, death, hunger, sorrow, lust, and sleep. But just because they accept without questioning, their eyes are opened, and they see clearly:

Cliffs that rise a thousand feet
Without a break,
Lake that stretches a hundred miles
Without a wave,
Sands that are white through all the year,
Without a stain,
Pine-tree woods, winter and summer
Ever green,
Streams that for ever flow and flow
Without a pause,
Trees that for twenty thousand years
Your vows have kept—
You have suddenly healed the pain of a traveller's heart,
And moved his brush to write a new song.

They are human, these Chinese poets: and it is just because they set no store upon anything but nature and humanity, that they regard an humble cottage, a cup of wine, a friend, and a good talk as the summum bonum of existence. It is when they have to part with one of these things, that they lacerate our hearts:

Sad, sad—lean with long illness;
Monotonous, monotonous—days and nights pass.
The summer trees have clad themselves in shade;
The autumn “lan” already houses the dew.
The eggs that lay in the nest when I took to my bed
Have changed into little birds and flown away.
The worm that then lay hidden in its hole
Has hatched into a cricket sitting on the tree.
The four Seasons go on for ever and ever:
In all nature nothing stops to rest
Even for a moment. Only the sick man’s heart
Deep down still aches as of old!

Of Mr. Waley’s qualifications as a translator I say nothing. Let these extracts speak for themselves. As regards his selection, there are some objections to be made. It is a pity that someone as well equipped as he is, does not give us a more complete and exhaustive selection from say half-a-dozen poets, rather than a miscellaneous collection ranging over centuries. It is true that Mr. Waley has tried to do this, notably in the case of Po-Chü-I. But he has made a serious mistake by giving us a superabundance of this author’s satires, which I find dull, and crammed with obscure historical allusions; and of his reflective pieces, which represent him as only an affectionate garrulous old man; but omitting all mention of the *Everlasting Wrong* and the *Lute Girl*, except to say that their author set little store by either. It

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

may be true that in his old age Po-Chü-I thought so; but the fact remains that both were written by him, and that the former especially is one of the finest poems ever written in Chinese or any other language.

Mr. Waley makes amends for this slip, by giving us twelve poems by Tao-Chien, which convince us that this great recluse, who despised the court, "could not crook the hinges of his back for a peck of rice a day," and preferred to grow chrysanthemums in obscurity rather than be a minister of state, was one of the supreme poets of China, every word of whose work should be studied again and again.

So we quit this volume with the conviction that the Chinese poets, working on themes that were purely commonplace, and saying commonplace things about them, nevertheless said all that poetry will ever be capable of saying. For twelve or thirteen centuries at least, their art remained at its height—surely a time long enough in the history of any nation. Then it declined, became merely a complicated literary exercise, a fascinating but empty game of allusions, an artificial fabrication, instead of a living expression of human emotion. It is quite true that the Chinese have produced neither a Homer, nor an Aeschylus, nor a Shakespeare, nor a Tolstoy. But we who have all these great men need only soberly consider the state of the world today, to wonder whether, after all, we are any better off for possessing them. And the Chinese at least have poetry—endless fields of it, hundreds of lives that have perfectly expressed themselves in song. It is enough for them, and perhaps some day

it will be enough for us also. *Ex oriente lux*—some day we may be able to say :

Business men boast of their skill and cunning,
But in philosophy they are like little children.
Bragging to each other of successful depredations,
They neglect to consider the ultimate fate of the body.
What should they know of the master of Dark Truth
Who saw the wide world in a jade cup,
By illumined conception got clear of Heaven and Earth,
On the chariot of Mutation entered the Gate of Immortality?

John Gould Fletcher

NARCISSUS AT WAR

Eidola, by Frederic Manning. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Over here we don't know what this English poet looks like, but somehow his book suggests a young Narcissus in the trenches. It is shot full of beauty and sorrow, the beauty of a Greek clarity and the sorrow of an austere shapeliness. The book should be read backward, for the earlier poems are printed at the end, among them the lovely *Simaetha*, finely curved as a vase, which POETRY printed in ancient days before the war. Even through these runs an undercurrent of sorrow, as if the beauty of life were too keen for joy.

But Narcissus is not blasted in the trenches; no shell destroys him—thank heaven!—and even his ecstasy in beauty survives, suffering a sea-change under the alchemy of war.

But the mean things of the earth hast thou chosen,
Decked them with suffering,
Made them beautiful with the passion for rightness,
Strong with the pride of love.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Exalted by the "passion of rightness" and the "pride of love," he finds beauty even here—the horror has no power over him. *The Sign* is an expression of spiritual triumph:

We are here in a wood of little beeches:
And the leaves are like black lace
Against a sky of nacre.

One bough of clear promise
Across the moon.

It is in this wise that God speaketh unto me.
He layeth hands of healing upon my flesh,
Stillling it in an eternal peace.
Until my soul reaches out myriad and infinite hands
Toward him;
And is eased of its hunger.

And I know that this passes:
This implacable fury and torment of men,
As a thing insensate and vain:
And the stillness hath said unto me,
Over the tumult of sounds and shaken flame,
Out of the terrible beauty of wrath,
I alone am eternal.

One bough of clear promise
Across the moon.

Yet there are vividly realistic pictures of a soldier's life—in *Grotesque*, *Leaves*, *The Trenches*, *A Shell*, *The Transport* full of the splendor of two stallions, and that bitterly tragic detail of death, *The Face*.

It would be unfair to quote only from the war poems if some of the best of the earlier ones were not familiar to our readers. *Ganhardine* is a lovely song in rhyme, and *To Sai* gives us the very soul of a little child. H. M.

ANOTHER SOLDIER-POET

The Old Huntsman, by Siegfried Sassoon. E. P. Dutton & Co.

After the wartime fervor has died away, how much will be left of the war-poets? It is by no means an easy task for the critic to say, since he too is under the emotional spell, and, if he were not, one would suspect him of being lacking in human sympathy and so lacking in what is most essential in criticism. It is much better therefore to err on the side of being over-generous than it is to be niggardly in one's appreciation of those poets who have not only written of the war but lived it. What is good will outlast the war and what is bad will die with it.

Mr. Siegfried Sassoon, if one may judge by the opening poem, presumably an early one, had not really qualified as a poet until he experienced war. *The Old Huntsman* is in the manner of Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, and has the same monologuish monotony, the same sort of aloof, "class" patronizing that one finds in many of Mr. Gibson's pieces. Not that Mr. Gibson is a snob or has this class feeling, quite the reverse; it is rather the conscious effort to overcome it, as it were, that characterizes his work, as it does that of Mr. Galsworthy also. But it is not at all in this spirit that Mr. Sassoon writes of his comrades-at-arms, by which it may be perceived that he has made progress towards democracy and poetry at one bound! In *A Subaltern*; *Stand-to*; *Good Friday Morning*; *Conscripts*; or *Died of Wounds*; one gets vivid, sharp, realistic trench or hospital scenes and charac-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

ters; and one feels no gulf between the poet and the character or scene. Both are involved, and the result is conviction without theatricality. Yet, after all, it is hard to tell how many of these will outlast our fresh memory of the war: they have somewhat the quality of the press-dispatch or the war-photograph; they will always be interesting, but it is poems like *Absolution*, *A Mystic as Soldier*; and *Secret Music* that really prove Mr. Sassoon a poet of more intrinsic worth, and one from whom we may hope much after the war. Here is *A Mystic as Soldier*:

I lived my days apart,
Dreaming fair songs for God;
By the glory in my heart
Covered and crowned and shod.

Now God is in the strife
And I must seek him there,
Where death outnumbered life
And fury smites the air.

I walk the secret way
With anger in my brain.
O music through my clay,
When will you sound again?

Another hopeful sign in Mr. Sassoon's work is his healthy reaction to the sentimental values of war, mostly insisted upon by those not in the trenches; as in *They* or *Stand-to*. Perhaps this, applied to his own work, may counteract certain "Georgian" influences in it which do not seem all for the best.

A. C. H.

CORRESPONDENCE

AN ENGLISH POET ON "POETRY"

Dear Editor: I resent any attacks made in England on your exquisite and ably edited magazine—POETRY of Chicago. It is full of daring and lovely experiment and achievement.

For example, I find the work of H. D. and Max Michelson very beautiful, and sincerely think that numbers of American artists are ahead—in the mass—of ours.

There are, as you are of course aware, a number of similar experiments in metre and feeling, going on in Italy and France among the younger men. I could give you many names—interesting as those of R. Aldington, Ezra Pound or R. Frost. And as an old contributor to the *Saturday Review* perhaps I may say that poetical criticism in England just now, from a number of social causes, is at a very low level. It has never, as compared with France, been generally high in England.

The English, after fifty or sixty years, have, for instance, still not the faintest idea of how great a poet they possessed—how Greek an artist—in Matthew Arnold. He is still thought to be far inferior to Tennyson; whereas Tennyson, compared to Arnold, was a talented child, who grew up into a venal muddler of the Millais standard. He was a considerable man; as an artist he had no trace of greatness about him. So bad is English natural taste, so confused, that it took nearly three hundred years or so—till about

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

1771, the date of the publication of Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (and of course Mackenzie was a Scotchman)—before English published criticism noticed that there was anything in the least remarkable or subtle about Shakespeare's handling of the character of Hamlet. This was unobserved by the best English critics—Dryden, Pope, Addison and Johnson.

We are in the art of literature a people vital, but coarse, stupid, and exceedingly confused. We live in a draughty channel between the continental and the insular. Our mind is always in what is called a "tide-up"; rough waters like those at the meeting of the streams of the North Sea and the Atlantic off Dover.

Off Dover, you must know, there is never the normal eight minutes of "slack water" at the turning of flow into ebb. There is always a mad churning between two seas. And England is always in a witch's reel between Hebraism and Hellenism; materialism (commercial cynicism) against social reform; political wealth against popular poverty. At present England is exhausted by her massive political effort to transform herself into a self-directed and perfectly free nation. She is extremely noble, a great nation; but she has at present apparently no intelligence or fine leisure of feeling left over, after the shock of parties and of armies, in which to practice or adequately to criticise, the finest of the fine arts. She has, for example (and this we owe to an admixture of savage inertia into Philistine Puritanism), no National Theatre. And her living poets must endow her

An English Poet on "Poetry"

with beauty in her own despite. They should expect no reward, for they will certainly receive none—why should they fare better than Shakespeare, Arnold, Shelley or Blake? And perhaps that is best. One may remember Athenian treatment of Socrates and Pheidias, and be patient with our people. They do not know that "the beautiful is hard."

Herbert Trench

Settignano, Italy, Dec. 2nd, 1918

A CORRECTION

Alice Corbin regrets that the final version of her poem, *Song of Sunlight*, arrived from Santa Fe too late for revision of the text last month. We record it here, in order that subscribers may enter the change in their copies. The final stanza should read:

Sunlight, I am mad with your light.
Rocks, earth,
I have never known you before.
Suns, you are powdered like rocks
In my body.
Earth, your red canyons
Are sluiced through me,
The crests of your hills
Break over me—
I ride upward to meet them.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A NEW PRIZE

Mr. S. King Russell, of New York, a student of literature and music, offers a prize of one hundred dollars for good work by a young poet. The prize will be awarded next November at the same time as the two prizes already announced.

The understanding is that Mr. Russell's prize is to be awarded by the editorial staff of POETRY to any young poet whose work the magazine has printed, whether it has appeared during the current year or earlier. The prize is to represent, in the same manner that a scholarship would if we were fortunate enough to have the bestowal of one, a mark of distinction and encouragement, and it is to be given to the young poet, comparatively unknown as yet, who, in the opinion of the jury, most deserves and needs the stimulus of such an award.

A CHANGE IN THE STAFF

Miss Helen Hoyt, who has recently returned to Chicago from Appleton, Wisconsin, is now an associate editor of POETRY. Our readers will remember Miss Hoyt as a contributor of verse to most of the special magazines, as well as a few of more general circulation.

NOTES

Of the two collaborators in the opening number of this issue, Miss Lowell needs no introduction. Mrs. Florence Ayscough, long resident in China and an ardent student of the language and arts of the country, has been for some years librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society in Shanghai, and has contributed six articles to the recently published *Encyclopaedia Sinica*. The second of the present group of poems was quoted, by our permission, in an article contributed by Mrs. Ayscough to *The Mentor* last December.

Mr. Charles Vildrac is one of the really important French poets of our time, and a volume of Mr. Bynner's translations of his selected poems will be published in April by the Yale University Press. His *Gloire* first appeared in *POETRY* for August, 1913. He is the author of a number of books of verse and prose, including the admirable *Notes sur la Technique Poétique*, written in collaboration with Georges Duhamel.

Mr. D. H. Lawrence, the distinguished English poet, was another early contributor to *POETRY*, and he is included in the three imagist anthologies published a year apart by the Houghton Mifflin Co. *Amores* was published by B. W. Huebsch in 1916. A later book, *New Poems*, has been recently issued in England by Martin Secker, and the poems here presented will be included in a *de luxe* edition to be offered soon by C. W. Beaumont.

Mr. Richard Butler Glaenzer, of Bermuda and New York, also an early contributor, is the author of *Beggar and King* (Yale Univ. Press).

Mr. Baker Brownell, who is still in the U. S. Service in Florida, was introduced by *POETRY* with a group of soldier poems, *In Barracks*, nearly a year ago.

The other poets are new to our readers. Miss Margaret Judson is an associate professor of English at Vassar College. Miss B. K. van Slyke has been a teacher and social worker in various places, but is now a breeder of dogs at Narberth, Pa. Mr. John Bakeless was at last accounts a student at Williams College. "C. Cunningham" is the pen-name of a poet in Keithsburg, Ill. None of these has published a volume or appeared much elsewhere.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

- Chamber Music*, by James Joyce. B. W. Huebsch, New York.
A Family Album and Other Poems, by Alter Brody. B. W. Huebsch.
The Madman—His Parables and Poems, by Kahlil Gibran. Alfred A. Knopf.
Colors of Life, by Max Eastman. Alfred A. Knopf.
Fairies and Fusiliers, by Robert Graves. Alfred A. Knopf.
The Other Side, by Gilbert Frankau. Alfred A. Knopf.
The Ghetto and Other Poems, by Lola Ridge. B. W. Huebsch.
Before Dawn, by Irene Rutherford McLeod. B. W. Huebsch.
Growing Pains, by Jean Starr Untermeyer. B. W. Huebsch.
Gleams and Dreams, by Reuben Goldsmith. James T. White & Co.
Estrays, by Thomas Kennedy, George Seymour, Vincent Starrett, Basil Thompson. Privately printed, Camelot Press, Chicago.
Lanterns in Gethsemane, by Willard Wattles. E. P. Dutton & Co.
Khaki and Blue, by Frank L. Wood. Privately printed, Abington Press, Chicago.
Stars, by Florence Churchill Casebeer. Trade Printing Co., Los Angeles.
Poems of New England and Old Spain, by Frederick E. Pierce. Four Seas Co.
Idylls of the Skillet Fork, by Payson S. Wild. Ralph Fletcher Seymour.
Octavia and New Poems, by Charles V. H. Roberts. The Torch Press, N. Y. C.

PLAYS:

- Purple Youth, A Play in One Act*, by Robert DeCamp Leland. Four Seas Co.

ANTHOLOGIES AND TRANSLATIONS:

- The Path on the Rainbow—The Book of Indian Poems*, edited by George W. Cronyn. Boni & Liveright.
Chinese Lyrics from the Book of Jade, translated from the French of Judith Gautier by James Whitall. B. W. Huebsch.
Carnegie Tech War Verse. Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh.
The Soldier's Progress—From the War Letters of Carnegie Tech Men. Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh.
The English Poets—Selections with Critical Introductions by Various Writers and a General Introduction by Matthew Arnold, edited by Thomas Humphry Ward. Vol. 5. Macmillan.

MARCH, 1919

POEMS FROM THE PROPERTIUS SERIES

I

SHADES of Callimachus, Coan ghosts of Philetas,
It is in your grove I would walk—
I who come first from the clear font,
Bringing the Grecian orgies into Italy,
and the dance into Italy.

Who hath taught you so subtle a measure,
in what hall have you heard it;
What foot beat out your time-bar,
what water has mellowed your whistles?

Out-weariers of Apollo will, as we know, continue their
Martian generalities.

We have kept our erasers in order.
A new-fangled chariot follows the flower-hung horses;
A young Muse, with young loves clustered about her,
ascends with me into the ether, . . .
And there is no high road to the Muses.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Annalists will continue to record Roman reputations,
Celebrities from the Trans-Caucasus will belaud Roman
celebrities
And expound the distentions of empire.

But for something to read in normal circumstances?
For a few pages brought down from the forked hill unsullied?

I ask a wreath which will not crush my head.
And there is no hurry about it;
I shall have, doubtless, a boom after my funeral,
Seeing that long standing increases all things,
regardless of quality.
And who would have known the towers
pulled down by a deal-wood horse,
Or of Achilles withstaying waters by Simois,
Or of Hector spattering wheel-rims,
Or of Polydamas, by Scamander, or Helenus and Deiphobus?
Their door-yard would scarcely know them, or Paris;
Small talk, O Ilion, and O Troad,
twice taken by Oetæan gods,
If Homer had not stated your case!

And I also among the later nephews of this city
shall have my dog's day
With no stone upon my contemptible sepulchre,
My vote coming from the temple of Phoebus in Lycia, at
Patara.

And in the mean time my songs will travel,
And the devirginated young ladies will enjoy them
 when they have got over the strangeness;
For Orpheus tamed the wild beasts—
 and held up the Threician river;
And Citharaon shook up the rocks by Thebes
 and danced them into a bulwark at his pleasure;
And you, O Polyphemus?—did harsh Galatea almost
Turn to your dripping horses, because of a tune, under
 Aetna?
We must look into the matter. Bacchus and Apollo in favor
 of it,
There will be a crowd of young women doing homage to
 my palaver.

Though my house is not propped up by Taenarian columns
From Laconia (associated with Neptune and Cerberus),
Though it is not stretched upon gilded beams;
My orchards do not lie level and wide
 as the forests of Phæacia,
 the luxurious and Ionian,
Nor are my caverns stuffed stiff with a Marcian vintage—
 (my cellar does not date from Numa Pompilius,
Nor bristle with wine jars):
Yet the companions of the Muses will keep their collective
 nose in my books,
And, weary with historical data, they will turn to my dance
 tune.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Happy who are mentioned in my pamphlets;
The songs shall be a fine tomb-stone over their beauty.

But against this?

Neither expensive pyramids scraping the stars in their route,
Nor houses modelled upon that of Jove in East Elis,
Nor the monumental effigies of Mausolus,
are a complete elucidation of death.

Flame burns, rain sinks into the cracks,
And they all go to rack ruin beneath the thud of the years.

Stands Genius a deathless adornment,
a name not to be worn out with the years.

II

I had been seen in the shade, recumbent on cushioned Helicon,
The water dripping from Bellerophon's horse.

Alba, your kings, and the realm your folk have constructed
with such industry,

Shall be yawned out on my lyre—with such industry.

My little mouth shall gobble in such great fountains

"Whereof father Ennius, sitting before I came, hath drunk."

I had rehearsed the Curian brothers, and made remarks on
the Horatian javelin

(Near Q. H. Flaccus' book-stall).

"Of" royal Aemilia, drawn on the memorial raft,

"Of" the victorious delay of Fabius, and the left-handed
battle at Cannae,

Of lares fleeing the "Roman seat"

 I had sung of all these
And of Hannibal,
 and of Jove protected by geese.

And Phoebus, looking upon me from the Castalian tree,
Said then, "You idiot! What are you doing with that
water—

Who has ordered a book about heroes?

 You need, Propertius, not think
About acquiring that sort of a reputation!

 Soft fields must be worn by small wheels,
Your pamphlets will be thrown, thrown often, into a chair
Where a girl waits alone for her man.

 Why wrench your page out of its course?
No keel will sink with your genius—

 Let another oar churn the water,
Another wheel, the arena: mid-crowd is as bad as mid-sea."

He had spoken and pointed me a place with his plectrum.

Orgies of vintages, an earthen image of Silenus
Strengthened with rushes, Tegean Pan,
The small birds of the Cytherean mother,
 their Punic faces dyed in the Gorgon's lake;
Nine girls, from as many countrysides,
 bearing her offerings in their unhardened hands:

Such my cohort and setting. And she bound ivy to his
thyrsos,

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Fitted songs to the strings,
 roses twined in her hands.
And one among them looked at me with face offended—
Calliope:
 “Content ever to move with white swans!
Nor will the noise of high horses lead you ever to battle;
Nor will the public criers ever have your name
 in their classic horns;
Nor Mars shout you in the wood at Aeonium,
 nor where Rome ruins German riches,
Nor where the Rhine flows with barbarous blood,
 and flood carries wounded Suevi.
Obviously, crowned lovers at unknown doors,
Night dogs, the marks of a drunken scurry—
These are your images, and from you the sorcerizing
 of shut-in young ladies,
The wounding of austere men by chicane.”
 Thus Mistress Calliope,
 Dabbling her hands in the fount, thus she
Stiffened our face with the backwash of Philetas the Coan.

III

Midnight, and a letter comes to me from our mistress
Telling me to come to Tibur “*At once!*”
Bright tips reach up from twin towers,
Anienan spring-water falls into flat-spread pools.

What *is* to be done about it?

Shall I entrust myself to entangled shadows
Where bold hands may do violence to my person?

Yet if I postpone my obedience,
because of this respectable terror,
I shall be prey to lamentations worse than a nocturnal as-
sailant.

And I shall be in the wrong,
and it will last a twelve-month,
For her hands have no kindness me-ward,

Nor is there anyone to whom lovers are not sacred at mid-
night
And in the *Via Sciro*.

If any man would be a lover
he may walk on the Scythian coast:
No barbarism would go to the extent of doing him harm,
The moon will carry his candle,
the stars will point out the stumbles,
Cupid will carry lighted torches before him
and keep mad dogs off his ankles.
Thus all roads are perfectly safe
and at any hour;
Who so indecorous as to shed the pure gore of a suitor?
Cypris is his cicerone.

What if undertakers follow my track—
such a death is worth dying.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

She would bring frankincense and wreaths to my tomb,
She would sit like an ornament on my pyre.

Gods' aid, let not my bones lie in a public location
With crowds too assiduous in their crossing of it;
For thus are tombs of lovers most desecrated.

May a woody and sequestered place cover me with its foliage
Or may I inter beneath the hummock
of some as yet uncatalogued sand;
At any rate I shall not have my epitaph in a high-road.

IV

When, when, and whenever death closes our eyelids,
Moving naked over Acheron
Upon the one raft, victor and conquered together,
Marius and Jugurtha together,
One tangle of shadows.

Caesar plots against India—
Tigris and Euphrates shall from now on flow at his bidding,
Tibet shall be full of Roman policemen,
The Parthians shall get used to our statuary
and acquire a Roman religion:

One raft on the veiled flood of Acheron,
Marius and Jugurtha together.

Nor at my funeral either will there be any long trail,
 bearing ancestral lares and images;
No trumpets filled with my emptiness;
Nor shall it be on an Attalic bed.

 The perfumed cloths shall be absent.
A small plebeian procession—
 Enough, enough, and in plenty.
There will be three books at my obsequies
Which I take, my not unworthy gift, to Persephone.

You will follow the bare scarified breast;
Nor will you be weary of calling my name, nor too weary
 To place the last kiss on my lips
When the Syrian onyx is broken.

 “He who is now vacant dust
 Was once the slave of one passion”—
Give that much inscription—
 “Death, why tardily come?”

You, sometime, will lament a lost friend,
 for it is a custom—

This care for past men—

 Since Adonis was gored in Idalia, and the Cytherean
Ran crying with out-spread hair.

 In vain you call back the shade;
In vain, Cynthia, vain call to unanswering shadow—
 small talk comes from small bones.

Ezra Pound

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

BROKEN WINDOWS

BERKET AND THE STARS

A day on the boulevards chosen out of ten years of
Student poverty! One best day out of ten good ones.
Berket in high spirits—"Ha, oranges! Let's have one!"
And he made to snatch an orange from the vender's cart.

Now so clever was the deception, so nicely timed
To the full sweep of certain wave summits,
That the rumor of the thing has come down through
Three generations—which is relatively forever!

THE YOUNG LAUNDRYMAN

Ladies, I crave your indulgence for
My friend Wu Kee; young, agile, clear-eyed
And clean-limbed, his muscles ripple
Under the thin blue shirt; and his naked feet, in
Their straw sandals, lift at the heel, shift and
Find new postures continually.

Your husband's shirts to wash, please, for Wu Kee.

TIME THE HANGMAN

Poor old Abner, poor old white-haired nigger!
I remember when you were so strong
You hung yourself by a rope round the neck

William Carlos Williams

In Doc Hollister's barn to prove you could beat
The faker in the circus—and it didn't choke you.
Now your face is in your hands, and your elbows
Are on your knees, and you are silent and broken.

COMPLETE DESTRUCTION

It was an icy day.
We buried the cat,
Then took her box
And set match to it
In the back yard.
Those fleas that escaped
Earth and fire
Died by the cold.

THE POOR

By constantly tormenting them
With reminders of the lice in
Their children's hair, the
School physician first
Brought their hatred down on him.
But by this familiarity
They grew used to him, and so,
At last,
Took him for their friend and adviser.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

A FRIEND OF MINE

Well, Lizzie Anderson! seventeen men—and
The baby hard to find a father for!

What will the good father in heaven say
To the local judge if he do not solve this problem?
Does one with a little two-pointed smile
Change the law—pouff!—into a mouthful of phrases?

THE GENTLE MAN

I feel the caress of my own fingers
On my own neck as I place my collar
And think pityingly of the kind
Women I have known.

TO BE CLOSELY WRITTEN ON A SMALL PIECE OF PAPER
WHICH FOLDED INTO A TIGHT LOZENGE WILL
FIT ANY GIRL'S LOCKET

Lo the leaves
Upon the new autumn grass—
Look at them well . . . !

THE SOUGHING WIND

Some leaves hang late, and some fall
Before the first frost—so goes
The tale of winter branches and old bones.

EPITAPH

An old willow with hollow branches
Slowly swayed his few high bright tendrils
And sang:

"Love is a young green willow
Shimmering at the bare wood's edge."

SPRING

O my grey hairs!
You are truly white as plum blossoms.

STROLLER

I have seen the hills blue,
I have seen them purple;
And it is as hard to know
The words of a woman
As to straighten the crumpled branch
Of an old willow.

MEMORY OF APRIL

You say love is this, love is that:
Poplar tassels, willow tendrils
The wind and the rain comb,
Tinkle and drip, tinkle and drip—
Branches drifting apart. Hagh!
Love has not even visited this country.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

PLAY

Subtle, clever brain, wiser than I am,
By what devious means do you contrive
To remain idle? Teach me, O Master.

LINES

Leaves are grey-green,
The glass broken bright green.

THE DARK DAY

A three-day-long rain from the east—
An interminable talking, talking
Of no consequence—patter, patter, patter.
Hand in hand little winds
Blow the thin streams aslant.
Warm. Distance cut off. Seclusion.
A few passers-by, drawn in upon themselves,
Hurry from one place to another.
Winds of the white poppy! there is no escape!—
An interminable talking, talking,
Talking . . . it has happened before.
Backward, backward, backward.

THURSDAY

I have had my dream—like others—
And it has come to nothing, so that

I remain now carelessly
With feet planted on the ground,
And look up at the sky—
Feeling my clothes about me,
The weight of my body in my shoes,
The rim of my hat, air passing in and out
At my nose—and decide to dream no more.

MAN IN A ROOM

Here, no woman, nor man besides,
Nor child, nor dog, nor bird, nor wasp,
Nor ditch pool, nor green thing. Color of flower,
Blood-bright berry none, nor flame-rust
On leaf, nor pink gall-sting on stem, nor
Staring stone. *Ay de mí!*
No hawthorn's white thorn-tree here, nor lawn
Of buttercups, nor any counterpart:

Bed, book-backs, walls, floor,
Flat pictures, desk, clothes-box, litter
Of paper scrawls. So sit I here,
So stand, so walk about. Beside
The flower-white tree not so lonely I:
Torn petals, dew-wet, blotched yellow my bare instep.

William Carlos Williams

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

AND FORBID THEM NOT

Sentry [at the Front]: Halt! Who goes there?

A Little Ghost: It is only I, kind sir—you must let me through!

Sentry: Little white thing—stop!

Where do you come from?

These are the lines of the allied armies.

Little Ghost: Sir, I'm the ghost of a dream

That the Prussians have murdered.

Once my robe was so pure, soft, shining;

Once I lived in a deep old forest;

Once they fed me with love and with music.

Now I must go to a far new country—

I and these others, my little white sisters.

Strange new soldier, give me the pass-word—

Kind sir, let us through!

Sentry: God! but this war is a queer war!

Look at 'em—starved white ghosties!—

Waitin' for me to pass 'em

Beyond our lines!

Me! I'm hard-headed, practical—

I never had any traffic with dreams.

Why, the world's turned dippy!

Halt, I say!

Numberless Little Ghosts [trying to pass him, wailing softly]:

We are the ghosts of dreams

That the Prussians have murdered.

Now we must go to a far new country.

Strange new soldier, give us the password—

Kind sir, let us through!

Sentry: How white and shinin' their odd wee faces!

Well then, it's "Christ"—can ye say it, ghosties?

All the Little Ghosts [together joyously]:

Now we can search for our far new country!

"Christ" is the password the soldier gives us.

Thank you, thank you, kind sir.

[They flock swiftly past him; their tattered filmy rags blow softly against him, and now and then small skeleton hands reach out and touch him gently.]

Sentry: Haven't ye one that would stay for a bit with me,

Now that I've passed the whole lot of ye, ghosties?

Wouldn't one stay with a dull lonely fellow

Just for the company?

First Little Ghost: I will stay with you, strange new soldier,

Where you guard the walls for the world.

[She grows suddenly tall and very beautiful with a shining robe and crown of stars.]

All the other Little Ghosts [calling joyfully and softly from far away behind the lines]:

We are the ghosts of dreams

That the Prussians have murdered.

Forbid us not, for we have the password—"Christ."

Louise Morey Bowman

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

WITH THE A. E. F.

ANTE PROELIUM

In the clairvoyance of a midnight waking
I took an inventory of Myself:
A little knowledge on a dusty shelf,
A few good deeds (Fragile—Beware of Breaking),
A light heart, fissured by no hours of aching,
Scraps of old songs, fragments of childish fears,
And blowing memories of unlit years,
And litter of achievements—in the making.

"And this," I said, "is all I have to give
In the extremity of all mankind!
I give it gladly; for I do not find
It hard that this agglomerate should not live;
The only thing," I said, "about being dead,
The hard part is, I have three friends," I said.

BEFORE MY FIRE IN A FRENCH VILLAGE

Words and faces and jests and dreams all come to me again
When I give my memory leave to play; but what I see most
plain
Is the little towns that loll in the sun and shiver and crouch
in the rain.

The towns of my youth come crowding and tumbling, they
will not wait for my thought:

Varna, Slaterville, Danby, Ransome, Mesnil Butte, La
Motte—

The towns where I went searching and troubled, not know-
ing what I sought.

The towns that I saw with a young man's eyes: Grafton,
Half-moon Bay,

Canutillo, Whitewater, Bolton, Bolinas, Monterey.

The sun was bright upon those towns the day I went away.

Now I have found a kind of peace, and long hours to beguile
With thinking of the roads I've trod for many a dusty mile,
And the little wayside towns where I have rested for a
while.

LE PÈRE SECRET

He was a wise old man, the color of earth;

From long upturning the earth his back was bent.

He told me how the wine was bad in the spring,

How the spring turned it moody and turbulent.

He tapped his earthy finger on the glass;

"The spring," he said, "the spring runs into the soil,

And warms the vine, clipped to the very blood,

To bring forth buds with agony and toil.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

"Not easily, as the profuse wild-vines do,
Only a few great buds on a quaking vine;
And in the caves the old wines suffer too,
And sour and turbulent is the spring-time wine."

O horny old man, intimate with the earth,
Will you not tell me yet another thing?
What is the vine to which my hot blood yearns,
Bitter and turbulent, suffering with the spring?

THE PIKER

Youth is for madness, youth is for dreams and visions,
Youth is for earnest folly and monstrous play:
So say the sages, so say the wise old warriors,
And so do also the twitch-lipped satyrs say.

Youth is a thoughtless laugh in a house of mourning,
A burst of sun on a chill rain-sodden day:
So say the gaunt-faced priests and the hooded sophists,
So also the sidelong-beckoning satyrs say.

Youth is a rose to be plucked and crushed to the nostrils,
For in an hour it is utterly blown away:
So say the minstrels, so say the wistful ancients,
So too the unclean satyrs say.

Morris Bishop

SECRECY

Down the hushed corridors of your dim soul
Lonely I go, and, yearning, pause by each closed door.
They stand so blind, indifferent, while no sound,
No breath escapes to tell me of your more,

Your less; immensities or nothingness.
But there is one apart, close-barred and rusted in,
Shrouded by years, your hand has never moved
To open. Have you heaven in there, or sin?

From all the other secrecies in you,
Despairing, I return to this, and weep and lean. . . .
Here terror of your hiding burns like fire,
The doubt of what will be—and what has been.

G. O. Warren

PINK BLOSSOMS

Pink blossoms blow against a blue spring sky;
Why must these blossoms die?

The songs of birds are pain, which once were sweet;
Was ever life complete?

Marion Ethel Hamilton

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

GRANDMOTHER

How can I, wordless, make you understand,
When you so gently stroke my withered hand
And ask me if I like my tea,
And if the long night rested me?

O girl, my body, not my heart, is dead—
Tell me, oh, tell me what your lover said!

Tell how the moonlight on the garden lay,
And what is the red flower you wear today.

I knew it once—the memory is dead.
Tell me, oh, tell me what your lover said!

WORLD LULLABY

My cryin' baby of a World
I've left behind today—
I would na mither it for a'
The red jew'ls of Cathay!

For I am breasted to the moors
And skirted for the sea—
That cryin' baby of a World,
It shan't come botherin' me!

I will not even stop to find
What ye're a-cryin' for—
A-wailin' and a-scrappin',
And a-callin' of it "War."

Frances Shaw

I'm off, and breasted to the moors
And skirted for the sea
To get a slice o' God's Peace
And bring it home with me.

There's somethin' tuggin' at my skirt
Whichiver way I wind,
And somethin' cryin' in my ear
That won't be left behind.

Oh hush ye, hush ye, darlint—
I was foolin' of ye quite:
Yer mither's comin' back to ye
To tuck ye in this night.

Frances Shaw

COMPENSATION

The years have taken all I had:
Swift senses, supple grace,
Gold from my hair, light from my eyes,
The roses from my face.

The years have taken all I had:
Now shall they give to me,
Who from their hands in one keen breath
Take immortality.

Anna Spencer Twitchell

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

MARCH IN TRYON

I

In the sweet March morning
On the upland road
Sunshine and Blue Moth
And I were abroad.

Like a voice the Silence
Where old leaves lay dead:
"Make straight a highway
For the Spring!" it said.

II

O East, there still are stars (a sign for sleep!)
Like daffodils in a dark garden springing,
While the white moon slips down that other deep
Of West, with low clouds clinging.
We wake for day, my armored-pine and I,
But only Watchman Wind goes lightly by,
His "All's well!" singing.

III

I have listened, O wind—
I must go.
The valleys below
Into blossom are breaking,
But snow
I shall find
On the way I am taking,
I know.

Level lands become steep,
Rough with stone.
There goes none
On this journey uncharted,
Save one
Who will keep
To the heights joyous-hearted,
Alone.

I have felt thee, O wind,
Out of space
Touch my face.
There shall be no returning.
New ways
Feet must find,
And the slow lips be learning
New praise.

Florence D. Snelling

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

DECORATION FOR VALOR

This boy, who stands so straight
While the General pins the medal on his coat,
May be thinking of a frame house
On Kelley Avenue in South Bend,
Or of the misery of having everyone look at him
While the trumpets blare.
But if I should ask him if he remembered
Curtius of Rome,
Or Childe Roland,
Or the Stainless Knight,
He would shake his head awkwardly
And say,
"No ma'am."

Hortense Flexner

FLYING

AERO-LAUGHTER

You've never laughed
Until the world
Has been beneath you
A mosaic map of lines and dots,
Called roads and mountains
By minute moving spots
Named men.
The jollity
Of this petty panorama!

When your plane,
Overcome with mirth,
Ripples in air pockets
With uncontrollable lurches,
Nosing down with a dart
To frighten the tiny earth;
Then recovers, fleeting
To heights beyond eyes' seeing,
Far from ears' hearing,
You are all tense
With the comedy of life
And the world's being.

At night the stars
Chortle gleefully with you.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The moon beams,
Benignly sharing your joy.
Thinking: "I laugh!
The world?—rather one world,
The buffoon of them all."

AERO-METRE

In pale spaciousness
I blend with subtle infinity.
The wing wires of my plane
Whistle a monotone
That lulls my earthy unrest
To sleep.
The faint blur before me
Of whirring propellers
Soothes my eyes.
I have no objective.
The sky is bare;
The here and there
Have equal values.
There is no ultimate to strive for—
Only higher air.
Thinner and more fair.

My plane sees a star to vault,
But tediously pendulates
In measured expansion
Far below.

CONSECRATION

The achromatism of the sky
Alters the adagio tempo of my consciousness.
The avalanche of air inundating me and my plane
Goes out again from me in coruscating graciousness;
And, the dissonance of my unrest soothed,
Makes me devout before spaciousness.
There is a débacle of various egos within me,
That refractory memory thrusts before me
Knowing they will return to me with earth.
But for the now on high, all the crevices of my being,
Long filled by glutted life, are cleansed;
And I know consecration in eternal ether.

CONSUMMATION

In pursuit my plane
Penetrantly perceives
The ineffable fallacy
Of premature theories
On insurmountable space.

The litany of attack
Creatively promulgates itself
To isolated planets—
Startled spectators
Of my persistence.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Area is fuel to be consumed.
The wilderness of sky
Is foliated resplendent—
Color in permeable black.
The center of all homage
Alters with my plane.

VOLPLANETOR

Insoluble in high air's quiescency
My plane, on earth a sophist, naively
Reconnoitres promiscuously;
Sinuously, nose retroussé,
Explores thinning strata
Of atmosphere, and, volplaning,
Deems itself a static medium.
How it routs pusillanimous planets
From its path at night,
Dazzling them pyrotechnically!
My purposelessness is equalled
By heterogeneous world events.
Nevertheless the sky's oscularity
Propitiates my primal impulses,
And tedium is thwarted.

PERSPICUITY

Pirouettes
My plane

Robert M. McAlmon

To the moon's
Perigee;
Papilionaceously
Lingers in its aura's
Phosphorescency;
Then, mutable ever,
Flits to Mars' perihelion.
O plane polytheistic!

Atavistic
In etherealism,
Seeking planets
Phantasmagorical,
Into pellucid
Pleonasm of space
I float
Evanescently.

Near the sheer blaze
Of the sun,
The translucent phlegm
Of my being
Reveals that I
Am the penumbra
Of the universe.

Robert M. McAlmon

COMMENT

A RADICAL-CONSERVATIVE

MAX EASTMAN speaks up again for exact metrics and against the freer forms which he once called "lazy verse." This time his argument—*American Ideals of Poetry* he calls it—forms the preface to his new book of delicately wrought "poems and songs and sonnets," entitled *Colors of Life* (Alfred A. Knopf). In this thirty-page article he sums up his case, the case of a man whose lingering conservatism, chased out of other departments of his mind, finds a last refuge in art.

Why not admit that Max Eastman is one of the most vivid and exuberant of human souls—an ardent creature who works, as he lives, with passion, convinced that he would not cringe before the white light of truth? The truth—he finds it in the old pagan clarity, uniting, across the Christian centuries, with the pitiless searching breath of modern science to bear away speculative fogs and aristocratic snobberies and humilities of faith. Like Rupert Brooke, he gives his ardor to a cause, and would die for it in glamorous ecstasy if need were. And, again like Brooke, he sees the figure of Beauty not quite lithe and nude, as Blake saw it, or—let us venture to say—as H. D. sees it today, but decorously draped in the sheerest and most softly colored of veils—silken chifons that fall, almost without effort, into rhythmic folds, into wistful modern reminders of the austere Greek line.

But, in presenting the fine brief sonnets and other lyrics

which are the result of his prayerful communings with Beauty, he is not sure enough of them to offer them without preliminary theory, without a plea. His plea takes the form of a contrast between Whitman and Poe, and an indictment of free verse as necessarily unrespectful of the line and therefore unstructural and formless. He quotes from Whitman's proud invitation to the poets of the future—that assertion that “there is something inevitably comic in rhyme,” and that “the truest and greatest poetry, while subtly and necessarily always rhythmic and distinguishable easily enough, can never again, in the English language, be expressed in arbitrary and rhyming metre;” and over against this he sets certain “icy” admonitions from Poe's *Philosophy of Composition* which he thinks assert that poet's “preoccupation with ‘verbal melody’ ” and his point that “beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem.” And Mr. Eastman adds: “The details of this difference are fascinating, but the generalization of it is what will illumine the modern problems about poetry.”

Well, in Mr. Eastman's generalization one gets indeed his point of view, the clever argument of a special pleader, but not much illumination. He says, “The opposition of these two characters and attitudes is complete;” when, in fact, however the personal characters of Poe and Whitman may be in contrast, their aesthetic principles are far from irreconcilable. Does Mr. Eastman seriously ascribe to Whitman “a grand contempt for beauty?” or think that Poe, in asserting, “beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem,” means by beauty merely “verbal melody”—indeed, a metri-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

cally restricted verbal melody at that—and does not include spiritual motive? Does Mr. Eastman mean to imply that iambic metrics, rhyme, the pentameter line, or any other familiar instruments of English poetry, are anything but tools and aids, are in themselves structure? Does he find more “form” (much abused word!), more sheerly structural modelling, in *The Raven* than in that glorious elegy *When lilacs last in the door-yard bloomed*, even though the former poem is in the school, let us say, of Houdon and the latter in that of Rodin?

To come down to our own immediate moment, does Mr. Eastman find more form—a more severely modelled classic shape—in Witter Bynner’s fine *Celia* lyrics, or his own purely carved love sonnets in this volume, than in Carl Sandburg’s *Lost* or *The Great Hunt*, H. D.’s *Oread* or *The Shrine*, Aldington’s *Choricos*, Amy Lowell’s *Venus Transiens*, or Ezra Pound’s *Dance Figure* and certain other lyrics? Mr. Eastman may prefer strictly measured iambs to free verse—no one will deny him a right to his preference; but when he tries to ascribe to these all the architectonics of the poetic art he is treading on shoals and quicksands.

Mr. Eastman complains that the line-divisions of free verse are arbitrary, that if they were once scrambled together in any poem even the author could hardly unscramble them. But may one ask him what that alleged fact has to do with the case? If this scrambling makes prose of any piece, then it was always prose—as indeed much verse is, both bond and free. Would Hamlet’s soliloquy or Antony’s death-speech be

any the less poetry if written out as prose, or if scrambled into irregular lines? Is Lincoln's Gettysburg speech any the less essentially poetry, in rhythm, structure, and spiritual motive, because it happens to be printed without line-divisions?

If the eye-test shatters Mr. Eastman's arguments, the ear-test is similarly destructive. He says: if "two or three of the most free and subtle" of the vers-librists were "to read one of their favorite passages into the ear of an instrument, it is safe to assert that there would be less identity in the actual pulsations recorded than if the same two or three were reading a passage of highly wrought English prose." Possibly; but if these same two or three were to read *Paradise Lost* or the *Ode to the West Wind*, or any other poem of subtle or sweeping cadences, there would be still less identity. Such investigations as Dr. Patterson's (sensibly approved by Mr. Eastman and thoughtlessly disapproved, in a recent *Dial*, by John Gould Fletcher) will turn the pitiless light of science upon the empiricism of prosody, and upon the unrhythmic misinterpretations of poetry which most readers are guilty of. A life-time of theatre-going, including more Shakespeare and other poet-playwrights than may be found on the stage today, has convinced me that ninety-nine per-cent of actors deliberately hash poetic lines into prose so that even Mr. Eastman could hardly unscramble them. And few poets, whatever their rhythmic instinct, may be trusted to read their own poems.

In short, Mr. Eastman's argument will not hold water. It

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

is a wistful effort to give the sanctity of unalterable law to merely individual theories and preferences. Mr. Eastman wants poetry as a refuge from life's passion and turmoil, and he uses the great name of Poe as his authority—Poe, to whom "a poem was an objective thing," Poe, who "would take sounds and melodies of words almost actually into his hands, and carve and model them until he had formed a beautiful vessel." Ah, but Poe's *passion was* beauty, especially beauty as it is found in poetry, whereas Mr. Eastman's passion is life, and its enhancement through social revolution. In politics and social ethics he is a radical; but shocked conservatism must take refuge in some sacred corner of one's being, and in his case the muse presides there with draped and decorous dignity.

H. M.

A GOLD STAR FOR GLADYS CROMWELL

Died January 19th, 1919

The toll of our heroic soldier dead does not complete the list of those who have given their lives in the cause of liberty. The friends and fellow-artists of Gladys Cromwell may well display in her honor the service star of gold, tempering their grief for her untimely death with the thought of her service, even as though she had fallen in battle.

Many sensitive youths, unnerved by the agonies of war, have been removed from "the horrid bitter game" by the nervous disability known as shell-shock. The self-drowning of the twin sisters Gladys and Dorothea Cromwell should

A Gold Star for Gladys Cromwell

not be called suicide, but the tragic result of over-strain due to months of contact with the dark realities of war. Delicately reared, protected always from the common rough-and-tumble of life, they must have over-estimated their strength and power of resistance when they volunteered as canteen workers and went to France a year ago.

We do not know the exact history of their service, beyond the fact that for some weeks or months they were working near the Front. No doubt they came into immediate contact with wounds and death, with the devastation of homes and the pathetic misery of refugees. For a creature so keenly sensitive as Gladys Cromwell's poetry shows her to have been, the experience was too keen, too poignant. Over-wrought nerves led her toward melancholia, a pathological condition which time would have remedied but which her inexperience did not recognize. That tragic leap into dark waters was, in all probability, the result of illness contracted in service.

Thus her fellow-poets of America are entitled to inscribe the name of Gladys Cromwell on their honor-roll, just under those of Alan Seeger, Joyce Kilmer and the other poet-heroes who died in battle. Like them she was not afraid of death, even though like them she felt to the finest fibres of her being the exquisite beauty of life.

Her expression of this beauty was, in her best verse, of a sculpturesque austerity. There was "folded power" in those *Songs of the Dust* which appeared in POETRY exactly a year ago, a severe modelling of spiritual fabric into rhythmic form. For these poems Mr. Braithwaite, in his annual Boston

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Transcript review, placed Miss Cromwell's name, with one other, at the head of his list for the year 1918. Their marble beauty, recording a sure advance over the earlier work in her volume *Gates of Utterance*, may well make her friends and fellow-craftsmen both proud and sorrowful—proud of her high service to the art and the cause of human liberty, and sorrowful that too-eager death has stiffened her limbs in youth and sealed her lips.

She waves us a fine farewell in her poem *The Mould*:

No doubt this active will,
So bravely steeped in sun,
This will has vanquished Death
And foiled oblivion.

But this indifferent clay,
This fine experienced hand,
So quiet, and these thoughts
That all unfinished stand,

Feel death as though it were
A shadowy caress;
And win and wear a frail
Archaic wistfulness.

H. M.

NOTE.—While the above was in proof, the writer met Miss Anna Ryan, whose valuable service in the Smith College Relief Unit is a matter of record. Miss Ryan said: "The Cromwell sisters were working devotedly at Chalons-sur-Marne for weeks while I was there—a particularly trying post, as the town was then under bombardment from earth or air almost every day; and from there they went directly to another post of duty at Verdun. Although even robust soldiers must be relieved after six weeks at the Front, no one seems to have ordered these girls to take a rest. At the end they were undoubtedly suffering from what the French call *cafard*, a condition of abysmal depression resulting from nerve-exhaustion. Unquestionably they deserve to be honored among those who have died for their country and the cause."

REVIEWS

A DOUGHBOY ANTHOLOGY

Yanks—A Book of A. E. F. Verse. Published in France by *The Stars and Stripes.*

No other book has stirred me so much as *Yanks* since *The Spoon River Anthology*. It is a collection of poems from *Stars and Stripes*, the doughboy paper published in France, and your soldier boy should send you one. While this book has by no means the artistic weight and finish of *Spoon River*, it is full of suggestion and the sense of Tomorrow. From end to end it records the moods of the private soldier, and absolutely refuses to be heroic, though some of the amateur versifiers are now dead on the field. The whole book has an atmosphere of improvisation, yet one-third of the poems show a reasonable economy of language. Yeats said, "rhetoric is heard, poetry overheard." Almost this whole book is "overheard."

It is written in the American language. It is colloquial, without too much slang, the easy American dialect of college boys and farm-hands alike. This is a step toward the future idiom for our informal verse; far from the shackles of Riley, and equi-distant from the Brobdignagian tyrannies and over-distensions of Whitman. It has not the least notion it is poetry. It is all an embarrassed refusal to be aesthetic, heroic or stoical.

There are a few Kipling imitations, but I do not put them on the honor roll. There is much eighteen-year-old

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

humor, and America going to war is not much more than a clean eighteen-year-old boy with a gigantic power suddenly placed in his hands. I have known college freshmen to be just this funny and fine and poetical when they were least aware of it.

The book is a history of war for any man. Though at first it has the casual aspect of an old shoe, an old hat, yet the cheapest poem has at least one line of beauty unawares. But the whole book is far more precious than any one poem. Rereading it the fourth time, it grows and clarifies. It is indeed news from the front. It finally takes on the colossal simplicity of a gigantic dam of spring water, and I prophesy for the work an enormous popularity.

While we are reading it, it delivers us from Whitman, thank God! If you really want AMERICAN poetry, I suggest that you forget Whitman a moment, and read *Yanks*. It contains an invisible writing which appears on the fourth reading, and which was never in Whitman, even on the tenth reading.

Here are two poems complete, and following them some lines and phrases, and one complete humoresque:

THE NEW ARMY

Who are those soldiers
Who go marching down?
They're the young fellows
Of your old home town.

The butcher's son, the baker's,
His Honor's lad, too;
The old casual mixture
Of Gentile and Jew.

A Doughboy Anthology

Don't they march manly!
Ay, they step light;
And soon by the papers
Ye'll see they can fight!

R. R. Kirk, S. S. U.

LINES ON LEAVING A LITTLE TOWN
WHERE WE RESTED

We with the war ahead,
You who have held the line,
Laughing, have broken bread
And taken wine.

We cannot speak your tongue,
We cannot fully know
Things hid beneath your smile
Four years ago.

Things which have given us,
Grimly, a common debt,
Now that we take the field,
We won't forget!

Russell Lord, Corp., F. A.

.
Oh, the Bishop in his mitre, pacin' up the aisle,
The Governor, frock-coated, with a votes-for-women smile,
The Congressman, the Mayor, aren't in it, I opine,
With a newly minted corp'ral comin' down the line!

.
If quartered in city or country,
The cook never misses his aim;
If messing in swamp or on mountain,
Two things will remain quite the same;
Though it may cause a row,
We get bosom of sow,
And beans—beans—beans.

.
They tell us tales of camouflage,
The art of hiding things;

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Of painted forts and bowered guns
Invisible to wings.

Well, it's nothing new to us,
To us, the rank and file;
We understand this camouflage—
We left home with a smile.

.
The mud that lies in No Man's Land
Is as thick on the other side,
And where the Germans take their stand
Is where we'll make them slide;
For our hob-nailed shoes will force a way,
And we'll knock them cold—for the U. S. A.

.
We've slept with all the gander's flock,
By waddling duck we've slumbered on—
In fact, we've slept with all the stock,
And they will miss us when we're gone.
We've seen at times the nocturne eyes
Of playful Mouse on evening spree,
And the coastwise trade at night he plies
With Brother Louse on a jamboree.
We've scratched and fought with foe unseen,
And with the candle hunted wide
For the bug that thrives on Paris green,
But cashes in on bichloride.

Perchance may come a night of stars,
Perchance the snow drift through the tile,
Perchance the evil face of Mars
Peeks in and shows his wicked smile;
'Tis then we dream of other days
When we were free and in the dance,
And followed all the old-time ways,
Far from the stable-barns of France.

.
It's no cinch for you, Buddy,
When the dreams with which you came
Melt into naught
As you are taught
The horrid, bitter game.

A Doughboy Anthology

.
We're going out to God knows what,
We'll be back God knows when.

.
The old home State is drier now
Than forty-seven clucks
Of forty-seven desert hens
'A-chewin' peanut shucks.

.
"Oh, gee whiz, I'd give my mess kit
And the barrel off my gat
Just to take a stroll up Main Street
In a new Fedora hat!"

.
These are tawdry thoughts in an epic time
For martial souls to own?
They are thoughts, my friend, that we would not mend,
That are bred of our blood and bone.
A mustard shell it is very well,
And an egg grenade's O. K.,
But we get our steam from our little dream
Of the good old U. S. A.

.
All th' peepul started clappin'
When his talk kum to a close,
An' a purty little lassie
Offered him a dandy rose.

.
I watched you leap to the big advance,
With a smile for Fate and its fighting chance,
Sweeping on till the charge was done;
I saw your grave on a slope of France
Where you fell asleep when the fight was won.
Just a kid, who had earned his rest
With a rifle and helmet above his breast,
Who proved, in answer to German jeers,
That a kid can charge a machine-gun nest
Without the training of forty years.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

They're jumpin' an' they're humpin' through the inky gloom o'
night,
'N' I wonder how them drivers see without a glim o' light;
I c'n hear the clutches roarin' as they throw the gears in high,
An' the radiators boilin' as the trucks go rollin' by.

There's some a-draggin' cannons, you c'n spot the sound all right—
The rumblin' ones is heavies, an' the rattly ones is light;
The clinkin' shells is pointin' up their noses at the sky—
Oh, you c'n tell what's passin' as the trucks go rollin' by.

But most of 'em is packin' loads o' human Yankee freight
That'll slam the ol' soft pedal ontuh Heinie's hymn o' hate;
You c'n hear 'em singin' *Dixie*, and the *Sweet Bye 'n' Bye*,
'N' *Where do We Go from Here, Boys?* as the trucks go rollin' by.

Finally, one complete grotesque, which is unsigned:

"HOMMES 40, CHEVAUX 8"

Roll, roll, roll, over the rails of France,
See the world and its map unfurled, five centimes in your pants.
What a noble trip, jolt and jog and jar,
Forty we, with Equipment C in one flat-wheeled box-car.

We are packed by hand,
Shoved aboard in 'teens,
Pour a little oil on us
And we would be sardines.

Rations? Oo-la-la! and how we love the man
Who learned how to intern our chow in a cold and clammy can.
Beans and beef and beans, beef and beans and beef,
Willie raw, he will win the war, take in your belt a reef.

Mess kits flown the coop,
Cups gone up the spout;
Use your thumbs for issue forks,
And pass the bull about.

Hit the floor for bunk, six hommes to one homme's place;
It's no fair to the bottom layer to kick 'em in the face.

A Doughboy Anthology

Move the corp'ral's feet out of my left ear;
Lay off, sarge, you are much too large, I'm not a bedsack, dear.

Lift my head up, please,
From this bag of bread;
Put it on somebody's chest
Then I'll sleep like the dead.

Roll, roll, roll, yammer and snore and fight,
Traveling zoo the whole day through and bedlam all the night.
Four days in the cage, going from hither hence;
Ain't it great to ride by freight at good old Unc's expense?

Vachel Lindsay

A POET IN ARMS

The Ghetto and Other Poems, by Lola Ridge. B. W. Huebsch.

This book is dedicated, in an introductory poem, *To The American People*. In order to appreciate fully the challenge of its seven lines, one should know that Lola Ridge is Australian by birth. She came to this country fourteen years ago.

Will you feast with me, American people?
But what have I that shall seem good to you!
On my board are bitter apples
And honey served on thorns,
And in my flagons fluid iron
Hot from the crucibles.
How shall such fare entice you!

Indeed, this small book holds little which could entice average American gentlefolk who are so content with conditions as they are that they never disturb themselves as to their composition or de-composition. These conditions are

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

subjected to the most uncompromising excoriation I've ever seen between two American bookboards, through the twin media of conditions as they aren't and as they should be. In other words, Lola Ridge is a revolutionist. She is a prototype of the artist rebels of Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary who were the forerunners of the present régime over there—men like Dostoievsky, Gorky, Moussorgsky, Beethoven, Heine, Hauptmann, Schnitzler. I don't mean that Lola Ridge is that horrific creature, a masquerading propagandist. She is first and always an artist. In trumpeting for freedom, going to blows for it, housing it in an art form, one unconsciously destroys its opposite. Love destroys hate and convention; libertarians, demi-gods; artists, shackling traditions; form, formalism. Beethoven hammered out nine symphonies, at least five of which were revolutionary. Back in Waterloo time, he was denounced as a noisy lunatic, a savage smashing old forms. On the contrary, he created Beethoven without destroying Mozart, for Mozart was himself a revolutionary. Without hinting at comparison, I'd like to predict that Lola Ridge will be charged with lunacy, incendiarism, nihilism, by the average American who reads her book. The everlasting minority will proclaim her another free singer, another creator of free form.

The Ghetto is a magnificent pageant of the Jewish race in nine chapters. In this single work the poet surpasses the dramatist, David Pinski, who is, in my opinion, easily the leading figure among the Jews themselves over here, and perhaps the foremost writer for the theatre regardless of race

or language. Her uncanny range of knowledge of the Jew and her realistic presentation of his lives are heightened and made plastic by the magic of the detached imagination which hovers always a little above realism and formulates its relative compositional values. Philosophically, she is more robust than Pinski. In the final analysis, she doesn't see the Jew as a tragic type.

Bartering, changing, extorting,
Dreaming, debating, aspiring,
Astounding, indestructible
Life of the Ghetto. . . .
Strong flux of life,
Like a bitter wine
Out of the bloody stills of the world. . . .
Out of the Passion eternal.

She sees the future of the race more clearly than the Jews themselves. She prognosticates the Jew as one of the leaders in the new world, and her vision is borne out by even a casual perusal of the present-day names of men who are re-moulding Europe. For sheer passion, deadly accuracy of versatile images, beauty, richness and incisiveness of epithet, unfolding of adventures, portraiture of emotion and thought, pageantry of push-carts—the whole lifting, falling, stumbling, mounting to a broad, symphonic rhythm, interrupted by occasional elfin *scherzi*—well, *The Ghetto* was felt by a saint who wasn't afraid to mix with the earth, and recorded by a devil who must inevitably return to heaven. Perhaps Lola Ridge is only another Babushka released from exile to a place of leadership among her contemporaries.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

There are a number of long poems, the best being *Flotsam*, *Faces*, *The Song of Iron*, *Frank Little at Calvary*, *The Everlasting Return* and *The Edge*. Poe's sentimental tirade against the long poem is refuted here. There's only room for a few lines from *Flotsam*, but they give you the plot of the poem, and a reminiscence of a Rembrandt etching.

This old man's head
Has found a woman's shoulder.
The wind juggles with her shawl
That flaps about them like a sail,
And splashes her red faded hair
Over the salt stubble of his chin.
A light foam is on his lips,
As though dreams surged in him
Breaking and ebbing away. . . .
And the bare boughs shuffle above him
And the twigs rattle like dice. . . .
She—diffused like a broken beetle—
Sprawls without grace,
Her face gray as asphalt,
Her jaws sagging as on loosened hinges. . . .
Shadows ply about her mouth—
Nimble shadows out of the jiggling tree,
That dances above her its dance of dry bones.

The Song of Iron is an exhortation to labor swinging to the rhythm of a paean, and a warning to "Dictators—late Lords of the Iron." It recalls the exultation of the last movement of Beethoven's dance symphony, the Seventh. Underneath the hammering rhythm, as relentless as a machine and as primitively nude as the animal, surges the call of mate to mate. It is my favorite poem in the book. *Frank Little at Calvary* is more than a fictitious rendering of the last moments of the I. W. W. leader, and suggests the part his execution may play in the future. *The Edge*—

And I lay quietly on the drawn knees of the mountain, staring into
the abyss—

is an ecstatic nature lyric closing on the serene cadence,

And I too got up stiffly from the earth,
And held my heart up like a cup. . . .

In some of her short poems, Lola Ridge participates in the crystallization of concentrated strength achieved by Emily Dickinson, Adelaide Crapsey and H. D. There are, particularly, three in seven lines—*Débris*, *Spires* and *Palestine*—which hark back in form and spirit to the seven-line dedication. This is *Débris*:

I love those spirits
That men stand off and point at,
Or shudder and hood up their souls—
Those ruined ones,
Where Liberty has lodged an hour
And passed like flame,
Bursting asunder the too small house.

And this is *Palestine*:

Old plant of Asia—
Mutilated vine
Holding earth's leaping sap
In every stem and shoot
That lopped off, sprouts again—
Why should you seek a plateau walled about,
Whose garden is the world?

In these reconstructive days, liberty is being re-defined, nationalism is approximating internationalism, the personal is trying to approach the impersonal. For myself, I must say that I cannot feel that liberty, internationalism and the impersonal will ever be realized. But for every attempt made, however unsuccessful of accomplishment, all the blood-

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

drops in me are grateful and sing hosannas. They respond
to Lola Ridge.

Alfred Kreymborg

TWO BOOKS BY FLETCHER

Japanese Prints, by John Gould Fletcher. Four Seas Co.
The Tree of Life, by John Gould Fletcher. Chatto &
Windus, London.

The reader who makes his first acquaintance with Mr. Fletcher's work through these two volumes will have a very unfair impression of the author's real worth; for these in no sense compare with his best work as it is revealed in *Irradiations: Sand and Spray* or in *Goblins and Pagodas*. The brevity of the small poems in *Japanese Prints*, and possibly their subject matter, are the only points of similarity with Japanese poetry; they are decorative in phrasing, but perhaps because of this very "decorative" element, they seem to escape that union of spiritual delicacy and profundity which is characteristic of even the slightest Japanese verse. We, as westerners, are too prone to overlook the underlying humanism of Japanese or Oriental art and to get only the outward appearance. Of course the outward mask is in itself wonderful, and "decorative" in truth, but this is not all; and when one in turn undertakes to create another mask, one must not forget that there should be a face underneath it. Otherwise the mask will be empty. Masks that only imitate other masks eventually become lifeless.

That is, I think, why these small poems by Mr. Fletcher do not move us, either as art or life. They appeal rather

Two Books by Fletcher

as a sort of literary bric-à-brac. This is perhaps too harsh for their intention, which is relatively slight. Nevertheless, unless interpretation really adds something, it is better discarded, and these poems which continually suggest, not the author, but the double art from which they are derived, do not after all do justice to the original. For Japanese poetry, however brief, is not slight, and it does not pose or attitudinize as these poems often seem to do. If, forgetting Japanese prints and Japanese *tankas*, Mr. Fletcher had written a series of small poems independently of Japanese models, the spirit, one believes, would have been much closer to that of Japanese poetry.

The Tree of Life represents a completely different phase of art from that exemplified in *Japanese Prints*. In these love poems, emotion has completely run away with the author. It is impossible to retain any definite impression of the book or of single poems—only a confused, vague tangle of sifting moods and images, none with enough contour to stay fixed even for a moment. The book is a welter of emotion, but it remains chaotic and without form. All poets have lapses. Only a comparatively small proportion of the work of the biggest men is retained and treasured. So there is no reason to be too despairing because these two books do not come up to Mr. Fletcher's already achieved level. But any man who has the *Ghosts of an Old House*, the *Blue Symphony* and some of the poems in *Irradiations* to his credit need not expect us to be satisfied with anything less.

A. C. H.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

PALE COLORS

Minna and Myself, by Maxwell Bodenheim. Pagan Publishing Co., New York.

This is not a negligible book. You may like it or you may not; but you will read it, and then find that you have many things to say: reasons for having liked; and possibly even enjoyed, Bodenheim and his peculiar, visionary word-forms, or reasons for having felt irritated and displeased by his eccentricities.

For simplicity's sake one may record a contrast or two. For instance, whereas his aesthetic color-sense is clear, his aesthetic sound-sense is faulty; and although he takes his words with a rare and delicate sense of their meaning, he is apparently unconscious or uncaring of their oftentimes lumpy, jerky ugliness of sound. I think it is a matter of unfortunate consonants breaking too harshly into an otherwise harmonious enough tonal silhouette. Such a line as "Picking up forgotten hints of its heart" is a strange amalgamation of jumps; also this:

The sea is pregnant with gracious discords
That falteringly shroud the sleep-rhythmed breasts of winds.

Even at a Thanksgiving feast one does not wish for too thick a slice of turkey on one's plate! On the other hand, a line full of beauty, but with an uncertain content is: "Upon an arched sarcophagus of pain."

All through the book one is conscious of a strong technique not yet quite fully mastered—a technique that does surprising things with the poet. For instance, although he shows

in many poems a real appreciation of the idea of "silence" he seems unable because of his multitudinous technique to avail himself of its curious values. A little silence somewhere in this line would have been truly golden:

Shaking nights, noons tame and dust-quiet, and wind-broken days.

The poems *To Minna* contain many obvious and hidden beauties, although they seem hardly the kind of things to be inspired by a young girl of eighteen, suggesting always a more mature personality. Of the *Myself* portion of the book, *Death* is very beautiful, and both soft and sharp:

I shall walk down the road.
I shall turn and feel upon my feet
The kisses of Death, like scented rain.
For Death is a black slave with little silver birds
Perched in a sleeping wreath upon his head.
He will tell me, his voice like jewels
Dropped into a satin bag,
How he has tip-toed after me down the road,
His heart made a dark whirlpool with longing for me.
Then he will graze me with his hands
And I shall be one of the sleeping, silver birds
Between the cold waves of his hair, as he tip-toes on.

And another *Death* has a fine beginning:

A fan of smoke in the long, green-white revery of the sky,
Slowly curls apart.
So shall we rise and widen out in the silence of air.

The last lines of *Poet Vagabond Grown Old* may also be quoted:

But now I walk on, alone.
And only after watching many evenings,
Do I dance a bit with dying wisps of moonlight,
To persuade myself that I am young.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The two plays at the end of the book, one written in collaboration with Ben Hecht, are less interesting, surely less Bodenheim, than the short poems. Bodenheim knows, however, what he means when he writes, and this colossal virtue can hardly be over-praised. And whether you read to praise or blame you had better read him.

I feel Greenwich Village in the repeated use of the word "pale." The pallor of Greenwich Village is a pallor too profound for light discussion, but my respect for Bodenheim and his finer work is such that I would object less to these "pale flowers," these "pale wearinesses," "pale purple lanterns," and "pale purple breaths," if I felt them to be not Greenwich Village, but Bodenheim himself. He may find it, being such a color-lover, a more stimulating atmosphere than that of his earlier dwelling-place; but if a poet must have a favorite cliché, of the two it is far better to be stamped with something like the big, common clichés of Chicago, or even New York (in the larger sense of course), than with the little, pale purple ones of Greenwich Village.

Helen Birch

SWINBURNE'S BABY POEMS

The Springtide of Life: Poems of Childhood, by Algernon Charles Swinburne; with a preface by Edmund Gosse. Illustrated by Arthur Rackham. William Heinemann, London.

Those who have loved Swinburne's love of babyhood will find his testimony gathered together at last, and adorned by

Arthur Rackham with pretty, if rather conventional, drawings in color, and less adequate pen-and-ink decorations.

The book gives one a chance to review fading impressions—for none of Swinburne's baby poems absolutely compels remembrance, as does Blake's adorable song for an infant two days old. Compared with that, the poems in this book are made; fashioned with exquisite delicacy and grace, it is true, but lacking the butterfly birth, full-grown and winged.

The subject tempted the poet to a flowery interweaving of rhymes in forms old and new. We have the series of *Cradle-Songs* rhyming in triplets thus:

Baby, baby bright,
Sleep can steal from sight
Little of your light:

Soft as fire in dew,
Still the life in you
Lights your slumber through.

Four white eyelids keep
Fast the seal of sleep
Deep as love is deep:

Yet, though closed it lies,
Love behind them spies
Heaven in two blue eyes.

There are of course many roundels—the charming ones on a baby's feet, his hands, his eyes, his *First Footsteps*. But no amount of graceful manipulation can quite make us forget the essential artificiality of this form. One likes better the interweaving of flowery rhymes in *A Baby's Epitaph*—here is one stanza:

April made me: Winter laid me here away asleep.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Bright as Maytime was my daytime; night is soft and deep:
Though the morrow bring forth sorrow, well are ye that weep.

And this stanza-form, from *In a Garden*, has an exquisitely appropriate grace and lightness:

Baby, see the flowers!
—Baby sees
Fairer things than these,
Fairer though they be than dreams of ours.

One may suggest the flavor, but not the richness, of Swinburne's prodigality in this garden of babyhood—the reader must look for himself. The book closes with that thirty-poem lament for "a house without children," *A Dark Month*, poems which are spun out too thin quite to deserve Mr. Gosse's adjective, "impassioned." H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

SERVING IN THE A. E. F.

The following letter from one of this month's contributors, a First Lieutenant in the 330th Infantry, is dated Paris, Jan. 8th, 1919:

DEAR POETRY: I am revelling in your bunch of back numbers as in a first taste of chocolate after months deprived of luxuries.

I finally managed to give up being a liaison officer—a piffling kind of job. I got myself transferred to Aeroplane Observation, which, next to being a pilot is the nearest approach to deification possible to man. And just as I was about to begin my flying Peace broke out and I came down to earth with a crash. I was thrown into a Classification Camp and thence into the Railroad Transportation Service, since I know as much about Railroad Transportation as I do about the weaning of infants. Just at present I am R. T. O. at Chartres, in command of one enlisted man, and with a rank be-

Serving in the A. E. F.

tween the Baggage-man and the Assistant Station-master. It sometimes seems to me curious that when I order some seventy hard-bit veterans into a freight-car, where they are to live during a two- or three-day trip, they obey me without question; it seems funny that they don't say, "Where were you when we were in the Argonne?" and refuse to ride in anything but first-class coaches.

It is a pleasant kind of life, though; the life of a railroad station is changeful and vivid (did you ever read Zola's *La Bête Humaine*?) And it gives me a thrill to wave my hand to the engineer and see a gigantic locomotive go heaving and spitting out of the station as if I had kicked it out. There's not much sense in grumbling because I haven't had a bloody job in the war, because nobody would believe me anyhow.

Is there anything in French you want? Most modern French poetry is mannered and bloodless, I think, but I gather that Professor Pound does not.

Morris Bishop

NOTES

Mr. Ezra Pound's free translation of a series of Latin poems by Propertius, of which we offer numbers I, II, III, and VI, will be included in his new book to be published in May or June in London. It is understood that Mr. Pound will, soon issue, in the same capital, the first number of a new magazine to be called *The Criterion*.

A distinguished Latinist of the University of Chicago says: "Mr. Pound's poems are, in the main, free translations, with excisions here and additions there. Most of them are from the third book, the first as here given being made up of the first and second of the original. The one numbered IV is mainly based on the thirteenth poem of book two with considerable building-up from elsewhere."

Dr. William Carlos Williams, of Rutherford, N. J., was another of POETRY's earliest contributors. His latest book, *Al Que Quiere* (Four Seas Co.), was reviewed last April.

Ditto Frances Shaw (Mrs. Howard Shaw), of Chicago, whose latest book is *Songs of a Baby's Day* (A. C. McClurg). G. O. Warren (Mrs. Fiske Warren), of Boston, author of *Trackless Regions* (Blackwell); Miss Hortense Flexner, of Louisville, Ky.; and Miss Anna Spencer Twitchell, now of Los Angeles, have also appeared in POETRY.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The other poets of this number are new to our readers. Mr. Robert M. McAlmon, who was born in Kansas in 1896 and is now a student in the Los Angeles University, has just been demobilized from Battery C, N. A. R. D. He has published prose articles, but as a poet his "only indiscretion," up to the present time, was in a camp paper, *Flight*.

Lt. Morris Bishop is another young soldier, as his letter from France (above) shows. He has had one poem in *The Century*.

Louise Morey Bowman (Mrs. A. A. B.), of Toronto, has recently appeared in Canadian and New York papers.

Mrs. Florence D. Snelling is a Boston poet. And Marion Ethel Hamilton (Mrs. F. M. Hinkle) lives in Albany.

• BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

From the Heart of a Folk, by Waverley Turner Carmichael. Cornhill Co.

The Band of Gideon and Other Lyrics, by Joseph S. Cotter, Jr. Cornhill Co.

Songs of My People, by Charles Bertram Johnson. Cornhill Co.

Garlingtown, by Frank Prentice Rand. Cornhill Co.

The Blue Crane and Shore Songs, by Ivan Swift. James T. White & Co.

Songs of a Miner, by James C. Welsh. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Counter-attack and Other Poems, by Siegfried Sassoon. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Songs and Symphonies, by Nathan Rosenbaum. Ferris & Leach, Philadelphia.

ANTHOLOGIES:

Humanity or Hate—Which?, by Harvey Carson Grumbine. Cornhill Co.

The War in Verse and Prose, edited by W. D. Eaton. T. S. Denison & Co., Chicago.

The Book of Lincoln, compiled by Mary Wright-Davis. George H. Doran Co.

PROSE:

La Mêleé Symboliste, by Ernest Raynaud. La Renaissance du Livre, Paris.

Sœur Vêronique, by Annie de Pène. La Renaissance du Livre.



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301
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Poetry

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